



THE INDEPENDENT

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Steven Berkoff
Why actors are
always drunks

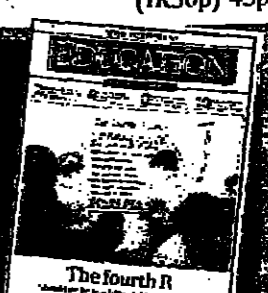
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and a nice bit of
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need morality
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Lib Dems in shock as Ashdown calls time on 11-year leadership

BY ANDREW GRICE
AND COLIN BROWN

PADDY ASHDOWN shocked his MPs last night by announcing he is to stand down as Liberal Democrat leader this summer after 11 years in the job.

Mr Ashdown, 57, insisted his decision had been taken so that he could spend more time with his wife, Jane, and their family. He said it had nothing to do with a rebellion inside his party against his strategy of forging closer relations with Labour.

Mr Ashdown said he would give up with "great sadness" but also with "some sense of achievement", as allies claimed he was the most successful Liberal leader since Lloyd George after doubling the party's number of MPs to 46 at the 1997 general election.

Mr Ashdown decided before the last election that it would be his last as Liberal Democrat leader, and he said he had told Tony Blair shortly afterwards. He had originally planned to announce his decision last year, but decided to see through his "unfinished business", such as extending the remit of a cabinet committee on which senior Liberal Democrats sit alongside Labour ministers.

The sudden departure puts a question mark over the close working relationship Mr Ashdown struck up with the Prime Minister. Mr Blair's aides stressed last night that he would not be deflected from his goal of forging a new, progressive centre-left alliance.

But Mr Ashdown's policy of "constructive opposition" with Labour is bound to be the crucial issue in the June leadership contest to choose his successor. Many of the party's 100,000 members, who will elect the new leader in a postal ballot, are hostile to his strategy.

At least five candidates are expected to enter the race. They are Charles Kennedy, the party's former president who is now its agriculture spokesman; Simon Hughes, the health spokesman; Menzies Camp-



Paddy Ashdown's surprise resignation has increased predictions of new jobs for him including an EU role or one monitoring the world's trouble spots

David Rose

bell, who holds the foreign affairs and defence brief; Don Foster, the education spokesman; and Nick Harvey, the campaigns chief.

Mr Ashdown's decision to stand down after the European Parliament elections may also put pressure on Mr Blair. Many Labour MPs oppose closer Lib-Lab links, and cabinet heavyweights including John Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister, and Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, will hope the change of leadership will put a brake on Mr

Blair's strategy. The Liberal Democrat leader dismissed speculation that he was standing down to take up a government post. Downing Street sources denied that Mr Blair would nominate Mr Ashdown to serve on the European Commission, saying the job would go to a Conservative.

Mr Ashdown made his announcement at the weekly meeting of his MPs at Westminster last night. Later he disclosed he would not have taken a cabinet post in a Lib-Lab coalition gov-

ernment. "I would not have taken a place in the Cabinet. I would have wanted to do that from the outside," he said.

He told Mr Blair at their first meeting shortly after the election to discuss their strategy that he intended to step down from the leadership in mid-term. Mr Ashdown told the Prime Minister last week that he would be announcing his departure after their clash at Question Time yesterday.

Both Mr Blair and Mr Ashdown agreed that their "project"

had been secured. The Liberal Democrat leader stayed on until the European elections legislation was on the statute book, but he delayed his departure after the resignation of Peter Mandelson, the Cabinet's strongest supporter of close Lib-Lab links, fuelled speculation of a cooling of relations.

Mr Ashdown also wanted to ensure that the latest extension of co-operation with the Government went through last week, before finally deciding the date of his announcement. "I

didn't want anyone to think that the project which Blair and I were engaged in was going to be disturbed by those events," he said.

"I inherited the party in a complete mess. I wanted to hand the party over stronger with a clear strategy in a strong position engaged in government and doing something important. That is what I have been able to do," he said.

Lord Holme said the MPs at the meeting were "stunned, saddened and surprised". But a

handful of senior Liberal Democrats had been told at an earlier private meeting about Mr Ashdown's plans. Others had suspected for some time he was planning to go, and were already privately forming rival camps.

The most relieved person at Westminster last night was Jane, Mr Ashdown's wife. "We never see each other. Weekends

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belong to the party as well as the week."

In a letter to MPs, which Mr Ashdown read to them, he said: "Though I love being an MP, I don't want still to be one at 65. And that means not standing at the next election when I shall be 60."

Paying a warm tribute to Mr Ashdown last night, Mr Blair said: "He is one of the outstanding party leaders of his generation."

A spokesman for the Prime Minister said he viewed Mr Ashdown as "a politician of considerable distinction who makes a major contribution to his party and country."

He said: "Of course the links between the Government and Liberal Democrats will continue to develop both in Mr Ashdown's remaining time as leader and thereafter."

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Nato forces mobilise against Serbs

FACED WITH a brazen show of defiance by the Yugoslav President, Slobodan Milosevic, Nato stepped up preparations yesterday for a possible military confrontation with Serbia over its treatment of Kosovo.

Nato ambassadors ordered planners to proceed with what officials insisted were "precautionary" measures. They shortened the notice required for ordering air strikes from 96 to 48 hours, ordered naval units in the Mediterranean to the Italian port of Brindisi, opposite Yugoslavia, and directed troops with the US 6th Fleet and the US aircraft carrier Enterprise to move from the Aegean to the Adriatic.

Tony Blair also made clear yesterday that Britain has not ruled out sending ground troops into Kosovo to force President Milosevic to desist.

"We are ready to take whatever action is necessary," Mr Blair told the Commons. Milosevic "risks a rapid military re-

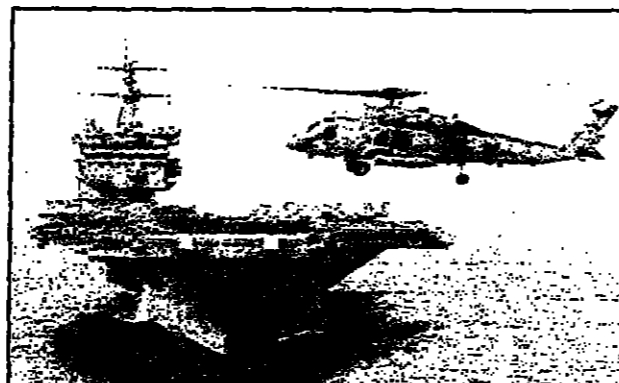
BY KATHERINE BUTLER
in Brussels

sponse from Nato" if he does not comply with United Nations Security Council resolutions demanding an end to the latest onslaught and a reduction in the level of the Yugoslav army and special police forces based in Kosovo. "We have to move with the rest of our allies, but we remain ready to act," Mr Blair said.

The US Defense Secretary, William Cohen, said the credibility of Nato was now "on the line." He said that any alliance military action would be aimed at reducing Mr Milosevic's ability to threaten the region.

Yesterday's Nato decisions reflect the urgent need to convince Mr Milosevic that there is a credible threat of force if he fails to comply with a list of demands, including full co-operation with the International War Crimes Tribunal.

But the international community remains split on military



The US carrier Enterprise is moving into the Adriatic with the Nato contingent preparing for action in Kosovo

intervention and Nato is now facing a dilemma only deepened by the empty-handed return from Belgrade of the alliance's two senior generals after seven hours of face-to-face talks with Mr Milosevic on Tuesday.

Despite their ultimatum, he remained stubborn and inflexible and made clear he had no intention of complying with UN

demands on Kosovo. He defended the "anti-terrorist" operation that led to the killings of 45 ethnic Albanians villagers in Racak at the weekend. "Blunt and obdurate" was the assessment of General Wesley Clark, the Supreme Allied Commander for Europe.

With its credibility at stake Nato must now be seen to react

to the Serb provocations of recent days, and the conclusion of its own generals that the October agreement on troop withdrawals from Kosovo have been all but torn up by Belgrade. Politically, however, there is less agreement than ever on a military response. A flurry of diplomatic activity is expected over the coming hours and days in a last-ditch attempt to force Mr Milosevic into compliance.

The political picture has been immensely complicated since October by the presence of over 700 potential Western hostages on the ground. These are the unarmed teams of verifiers sent in by the OSCE to monitor Serb troop withdrawals after the October peace deal. Air strikes are therefore not a realistic option unless the monitors can be evacuated safely first.

Nato's "extradition force" in neighbouring Macedonia is not yet equipped to do that and its

commanders have admitted they would have to rely on SAS units to organise a high-risk rescue operation.

Transatlantic divisions have also resurfaced. The Americans are talking up the threat of air strikes, insisting that the Nato Activation Order agreed in October, authorising the first phase of an air campaign, remains in place. But among European governments the view is that a new UN Security Council resolution may be needed to authorise force.

Britain doubled its contribution to the Nato contingent preparing for possible action in Kosovo. The Secretary of State for Defence, George Robertson, announced Britain was sending another four RAF Harrier ground attack aircraft to join the four already there. The British frigate HMS Iron Duke was preparing to head for the Adriatic from Gibraltar.

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Huge
man

Mr Hughes could win votes from those who have their doubts about the relationship with the Government. He will also appeal to the party's strong "green" lobby.

Nick Harvey, 37
Would be well placed

He is deeply rooted in the party's machinery as its campaign manager. However, his role as a backroom dealer has the disadvantage that, while he is used to dealing with journalists, he has a low public profile and seldom speaks during parliamentary debates.



round them, but that is not true in Scotland and this decision seems to have been made without remembering that the Scottish Liberals are about to enter the most crucial electoral contest in their history."



Lord Steel: Surprised by resignation

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THE WORLD YESTERDAY

c.daily; d.dreeze; T.W.; f.g.; h.hat; hz.hazy; in.mist; com. storm; sh.showers; sl.sleet; symphony
s.sandstorm; th.thunder. Most recent available figures. noon local time.

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Paris	f 25 77	Darwin	c 28 82	Manila	f 15 59	Rome	c 12 54
Paris	c 20 68	Delhi	c 24 75	Manila	f 15 59	San Francisco	c 18 55
Paris	f 33 91	Dubai	f 8 46	Manila	c 30 86	Santiago	f 26 79
Paris	f 28 82	Edmonton	c 12 54	Mexico	c 25 77	Sao Paulo	c 13 54
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way

Democrat MPs and he supported by 200 ordinary party members. Once the names of all candidates are in, there will be a no-member-one-vote ballot. He will be the only party member across Britain. Mr. Ashdown could win votes from those who have their doubts about the relationship with the Government. He will be a good lobbyist.

Huge political achievements of action man who never lost his boyish bravado



DONALD MACINTYRE

IF TONY Blair gets his way by reshaping British politics then history will judge Paddy Ashdown as the biggest figure among leaders of the third party since the war.

He took over as leader of the Social and Liberal Democrats in July 1988, amid the wreckage of the Alliance break-up after the 1987 election. He left it last night with his goal of a realignment of the centre and left in British politics tantalisingly within its grasp.

He is also by a long way the longest-standing party leader in Britain, having outstayed two Labour leaders and two Tory ones in his 10½ years in office.

Mr Ashdown is an action man-turned-politician who has never quite lost the boyish excitement and bravado that led him into the Royal Marines at the age of 18, after he left Bedford School in 1959. A member of the Special Boat Squadron, and of MI6 (though he has never admitted it) between 1971 and 1976, he spent almost all his active political life as a Liberal, apart from one brief period as a Labour Party member when he was in the Army.

He is also one of the few serious politicians to have worked actively as a labourer, as a personnel manager in industry, and as a youth officer for Dorset county council before he became an MP.

He took over his party at probably the most unpromising period in its history, and led it through an election in 1997 which secured it 46 seats, the biggest total since the 1929 election.

When he took over in 1988, the hopes and dreams of the Alliance – the uneasy marriage between the Liberals and the Social Democratic Party, which was supposed to replace the Labour Party as the main anti-Tory force in British politics – had collapsed in recrimination. The party he was taking over had become a joke – memorably dismissed by Margaret Thatcher two years after Mr Ashdown took over as a “dead parrot”. In November 1989 it was still languishing in the opinion polls, recording a mere 3 per cent.

Mr Ashdown himself was forced swiftly to abandon the



Paddy Ashdown, action man-turned-politician and the longest-standing party leader in Britain, having outstayed two Labour leaders and two Tory ones John Rogers

hopelessly ambitious vision with which he successfully fought his leadership election against Alan Beith in 1988 – that of replacing the Labour Party as the main party of opposition to Mrs Thatcher. But he patiently and steadily rebuilt the party over the next seven years by establishing a clear identity for it – and even more for himself. Familiarity might have bred contempt, and for many commentators it did. But after nine years as leader he still managed to score, during the 1997 election, a 58 per cent satisfaction rating – unheard of for an opposition leader.

But the more distinctive

achievement was to set his party a clear strategy for dealing with Labour, for seeing that politics was about power and not posturing, and coaxing his members towards the sort of accommodation with Labour that stood most chance of achieving their most cherished objectives.

Many leading Liberal Democrats were deeply uneasy about this strategy, as the forthcoming contest to replace him will show. But whereas David Steel secured very little in return for propping up the Callaghan government in the late Seventies, Mr Ashdown managed to secure from Mr Blair a pro-

portional electoral system for the European elections, the last through which Mr Ashdown leads his party; the promise of a referendum on electoral reform for the House of Commons; and places on a joint cabinet committee on what is now much more than constitutional reform.

In this course, he was helped since 1994 by dealing with a leader, in Mr Blair, who liked him personally, who thought the same way about most political and ideological issues, and who had fewer tribal roots in, and hang-ups about, his party than any of his predecessors. But Mr Ashdown's part in this process

should not be under-estimated. A month after the 1992 election, Mr Ashdown made an important and lightly coded speech in Chard, Somerset, in which he sketched out a route map for abandonment of what had been a fiction since Mrs Thatcher's election in 1979 – that the third party was prepared to prop up a Tory government in a coalition.

The word for it was “equidistance” between Labour and the Tories, and it was quietly buried in May 1995. But what showed Mr Ashdown to be a bigger figure than his critics suggested was his reaction to Mr Blair's leadership. Mr Blair was suddenly the

new kid on the centrist block; for a time it looked as if a Blair-led Labour party would eclipse the Liberal Democrats.

At this point Mr Ashdown could have either given up politics, or eked out the rest of his political career in carping from the sidelines. Instead, he saw quicker than many in his own party that Mr Blair was a hegemonic figure and that the best route to improving his own party's standing lay in eliminating wasteful conflict with Labour for the sake of it, while at the same time preserving his own party's identity.

The 1995 Littleborough and Saddleworth by-election was a

turning point; while it showed that there were indeed no “no-go” areas for Labour, it also showed that the Liberal Democrats, whose candidate, Chris Davies, withstood a vicious assault from Labour to win – were not going to be eliminated by Blairism. As a result, he was able to enter the friendlier positioning towards Labour which started soon afterwards from a position of some strength rather than total weakness.

The fruits were tangible: spontaneous tactical anti-Tory voting across the country, and the Cabinet links since the general election. And given that he

decided before the election to depart in this Parliament, it is easy to see why he has been pressing so urgently for further, closer links – a joint statement with Mr Blair about working together in November, and the extension of the joint cabinet committee process to foreign affairs last week.

He has had a strong marriage to long-suffering Jane, which survived the affair he was revealed to have had with a secretary in the run-up to the 1992 election. In a coup of media management, Ashdown went candidly public on it, pre-empting a good deal of hostile press coverage, and in the process he became one of the first politicians to demonstrate that the British electorate is more interested in their professional performance than their sex lives.

Now a grandfather, by retiring he will be able to repay his family for a decade of lost time. Invariably hyperactive, in 1992 he toured the UK, staying in the homes of ordinary voters, from fishermen to single mothers in the inner city, and wrote of his experiences in the book *Beyond Westminster*. It was a way of raising his profile, of course, but it also reflected his view that there was more to politics than the House of Commons.

In his range of interests he stood out in the notoriously parochial political village for his energetic and sometimes unfashionable pursuit of causes in foreign affairs, notably for more consistent allied intervention in the Balkans. He has been – in a party with a much broader streak of Euro-scepticism than is often realised – consistently pro-European and pro-EMU; he has been surprisingly steadfast in believing that Mr Blair will call a referendum on EMU, a mechanism which he was the first party leader to advocate.

The question is what his departure, announced last night, will mean for the slow process towards realignment, closer links between the two parties, electoral reform, and possibly, in the long-term, coalition.

Mr Ashdown himself is convinced that all the building blocks are in place. But it is hard not to see it as a setback. Mr Ashdown has faced almost as many critics of the process in his own party as Mr Blair has in his.

Mr Ashdown always said he wanted to leave when people asked “Why is he going?” rather than “Why hasn't he gone?” In that sense, it is a good departure by a leader on a high note. But both he and Mr Blair will be hoping that he has not under-estimated his personal importance to their joint project.



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Moments in Paddy Ashdown's life: In the Army (left); with his wife after he was elected leader of the party, and yesterday (far right) after announcing his resignation

Tim Hetherington (far right)

Labour links thrown into doubt

THE UNEXPECTED departure of Paddy Ashdown puts a big question mark over the close links between the Liberal Democrats and Labour.

Although allies of Mr Ashdown and Tony Blair insisted last night the relationship would not be affected, MPs in both parties predicted that there would be a "distancing operation" after the Liberal Democrat leader stands down in June.

Relations with Labour are bound to be a critical issue in

BY ANDREW GRICE
Political Editor

the leadership contest to choose Mr Ashdown's successor. His policy of "constructive opposition" to Labour is unpopular with many grassroots Liberal Democrats, and so leadership candidates will be tempted to adopt a more cautious policy.

Much of the closer union between the two parties was down to the strong personal bond between Mr Blair and

Mr Ashdown, who met regularly in the run-up to the 1997 general election - often as a foursome with their wives.

Labour's landslide victory was bitter-sweet for the Liberal Democrat leader. Although he doubled his number of Westminster troops to 46, he knew that his preferred outcome of a hung Parliament - and the prospect of a Lib-Lab coalition, which he had discussed privately with Mr Blair - would elude him during his spell as party leader.

But to Mr Ashdown's amazement, Mr Blair found time to telephone him on the day after his great victory. "The deal is still on," the Prime Minister told him.

The "deal" meant that, although there would not be a formal coalition, Mr Blair would work closely with the Liberal Democrats. After talks involving Peter Mandelson, then minister without portfolio, senior Liberal Democrats were invited to join a new cabinet committee

responsible for discussing constitutional reform.

Despite some grumblings in his party, Mr Ashdown could point to real gains from this co-operation, as the Government agreed to incorporate the European Convention on Human Rights into UK law and to bring in proportional representation for this June's European Parliament elections - a fitting swansong for Mr Ashdown.

Mr Blair was keen to forge even closer links, in the hope of forming a centre-left alliance

that would dominate the next century in the way the Tories had dominated the 20th century.

Last November, the two leaders secretly agreed to extend the remit of the cabinet committee to other policy issues. But both ran into immediate flak from their own parties, and Liberal Democrat MPs demanded a veto on which policy areas could be discussed.

Mr Ashdown was known to be angry at the caution of his troops, but came under further pressure because of Mr Blair's

refusal to commit himself to a referendum in this Parliament on electoral reform for the House of Commons.

Undaunted - and knowing he would stand down - Mr Ashdown managed one last advance this month when he and Mr Blair agreed the cabinet committee would discuss plans for a new European Union foreign and defence policy.

Labour critics of Lib-Lab co-operation, led by John Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister, used Mr Mandelson's resignation

last month as a platform to warn Mr Blair not to push ahead with closer collaboration. They will be delighted that Mr Ashdown's decision to quit will boost their campaign.

But Mr Blair will not be deflected from his historic mission. Whoever succeeds Mr Ashdown will receive the full force of the Prime Minister's charms. "We may have a temporary chill, but in the long run Tony Blair will ensure that warm relations resume," one Blairite insisted last night.

Prospect of a big job in Europe

PADDY ASHDOWN said that his decision to stand down was a "very personal" one which he had taken with his wife, Jane, before the last general election.

He said that ordinary people would see the decision - after 11 years as leader and as he approaches his 58th birthday - as "essentially human."

"Indeed when I was first elected for Yeovil in 1983, I promised myself that I would not do the job beyond my 58th birthday and would stand down no later than the general election after that date. I believe that judgement was right," he said.

The soldier turned diplomat and politician has told friends he has no specific post lined up. But it is thought he believes he still has one more job left, although it is almost certain to be outside politics.

Whatever job he takes it will be one that allows him to spend more time with his family. In his letter to MPs, he wrote: "For Jane and myself, this will be a chance to rediscover parts of our life with our family and friends which have had to be pushed to the margins in these past hectic years." He is likely

BY IAN BURRELL AND
KATHERINE BUTLER

to withdraw almost completely from the Liberal Democrats, not wanting to undermine his successor.

Mr Ashdown wrote: "No doubt there will also be new challenges to seek out. I do not know what they will be yet. But, I do know that, love this calling though I do, I have never been so obsessive about politics that I see it as the only thing there is in my life."

Some party sources were predicting last night that his future was in Europe where he has already won distinction by demonstrating a special understanding of the recent turmoil in the Balkan states and former Soviet Union.

The ideal role for Mr Ashdown might already have been created as the prestigious new post of EU Foreign Policy Tsar.

Senior diplomatic sources speculated last night that Mr Ashdown now stands a very strong chance of becoming Britain's nominee for the position. The job is being created in response to the long-held com-

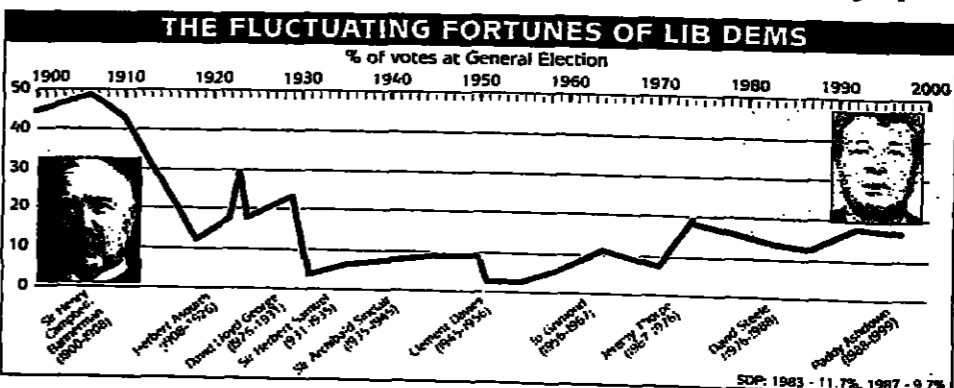
plaint that foreign heads of state never know who to ring at the EU when a crisis breaks.

The Government has already nominated Sir David Hannay, the former British ambassador to the UN. But EU leaders agreed last month that the post, known by its French acronym as Mr or Ms Pese, must be given to an authoritative political figure rather than a career civil servant.

Mr Ashdown's immense energy and his passionate involvement in troubled spots such as Bosnia and Kosovo would enhance his chances, it is believed. Against that, he has never been a government minister and he is not yet backed by the two big European political "families", the Socialists and the Christian Democrats.

He would also be suited to a position with the United Nations or Nato.

Closer to home, Mr Ashdown's special interest is Northern Ireland. He served there in the Army, his family are from the province and he was teased at school for his Ulster accent. His links would attract him to a role working for peace.



Voters of Yeovil praise 'colossal achievements'

FRIENDS IN Mr Ashdown's Yeovil constituency spoke last night of their sadness at his announcement and paid tribute to his "colossal achievements" for the Liberal Democrats.

A close friend and former constituency party chairman, Canon Miles Raikes, said Mr Ashdown broke the news of his resignation to him on Tuesday.

He said: "My first reaction is gratitude for all that he has done for us both locally and nationally. When he came to this constituency we were in third place. Every seat in Somerset was held by the Tories, but now we have got most of them."

"Paddy's achievements have been absolutely colossal. My second reaction is this he has shown great wisdom in giving the party notice of his decision. He was thinking of the party as well as himself and that is typical of Paddy."

BY MIKE BROWNILL

He added: "This is very much the end of an era."

Stephanie Bailey, vice-chairman of the constituency party said: "I think we accepted that he was going to step down sometime. Locally, we are pleased that we are going to have him back as our MP when he steps down as leader, although he has always been a very good servant to the town."

"Paddy has promised us that we are going to identify a successor and he is going to work closely with that person to enable the work that we have done to carry on."

The mayor, Roger Baker, said he believed Mr Ashdown would now take a back seat in public life. "I am as surprised as anyone to hear the news - Paddy will certainly be missed. He has worked hard to get

where he is and obviously he feels now is the time to go. I really don't know what he will do but he will probably step back into the background."

"I think that is what this is all about - he wants a home life and he certainly deserves one after such a lot of hard work."

Nick Speakman, chairman of South Somerset district council and Mr Ashdown's agent during five general election campaigns, said he had pledged years ago to step in as an MP by the time he reached 60.

Mr Speakman said: "This is not entirely a surprise because Paddy confided in me some years ago that he would not remain an MP after he was 60."

"I think that for anyone to be the leader of a third party who does not have all the advantages and trappings of a Prime Minister or of Leader of the Opposition is a huge strain."

Dixons

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Eating fibre 'may not stop cancer'

ANOTHER SHIBBOLETH of healthy living fell yesterday as US scientists reported that dietary fibre, the raison d'être of most breakfast cereals, may offer no protection against bowel cancer.

The finding, from one of the world's largest studies, of over 88,000 women, will send shockwaves through the medical and dietary communities. The Cancer Research Campaign, one of Britain's largest cancer charities, last year joined forces with Kellogg's, makers of All-Bran, to promote high-fibre breakfast cereals in a deal worth £1m over three years.

The lack of fibre in the average Western diet - which is low in vegetables, cereals and fruit - has been thought to be the key to many of the chronic diseases of modern living. Now experts suggest that the presence of sugar rather than the absence of fibre in the diet may account for the high incidence of bowel cancer.

The study, published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* was conducted by a team led by Charles Fuchs at Harvard Medical School and Brigham and Women's Hospi-

BY JEREMY LAURANCE
Health Editor

tal in Boston, Massachusetts. The researchers used as their subjects women enrolled in the huge nurses' health study which began in the mid-1970s and followed them for 16 years from 1980. Separate research is being conducted on cancer incidence among male doctors in the physicians' health study.

The women, who had no history of cancer or bowel disease at the start of the study, gave details of their diet in a questionnaire. By 1996, 787 had developed bowel cancer and 1,012 had adenomas - non-cancerous growths on the gut wall. But, to the researchers' surprise, no link was found between cancer and consumption of fibre.

For at least three decades, dietary fibre has been thought to act as a kind of colonic broom, sweeping food through the gut more quickly and diluting toxic chemicals that build up there. The main evidence was that bowel cancer was almost unknown in Africa, where vegetables and grains are the staple diet.

However, epidemiological

studies of the link have been "inconclusive", according to the authors, and the findings cast doubt on whether it exists. But they add that there are other good reasons for eating more fibre because it protects against heart disease.

In an accompanying editorial, Dr John Potter of the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Centre in Seattle, says in the light of the unexpected findings it may be time to re-examine the biology of bowel cancer and seek another culprit.

"Is it really a surfeit of sugar, not an absence of fibre, that causes the risk of colorectal cancer to increase? Somewhat ignored, sugar consumption is consistently associated with the risk of colorectal cancer and in a dose-response fashion."

There are 31,000 cases of bowel cancer a year in the UK and 17,500 deaths. Ministers have pledged to cut the number of deaths in the under-65s by at least a fifth by 2010.

Gordon McVie, director of the Cancer Research Campaign, said: "This is a very important study. It suggests... different components of fibre may have different effects."



Flooded fields near Exeter after heavy rain caused the River Exe to overflow

Tim Cuff

Why ET hasn't phoned us yet

BY CHARLES ARTHUR
Technology Editor

SCIENTISTS MAY finally have worked out why ET has not yet been in touch. They think that - in what could be seen as cosmically bad luck - any alien species that in the past was on the verge of exploring space was wiped out by radiation from colliding stars.

However, aliens could now be on their way as the galactic weather has improved in the past few billion years, says Dr James Annis, an astrophysicist at the Fermilab, in Chicago.

Though the idea put forward by Dr Annis in today's *New Scientist* may sound fanciful, it does explain something that has mystified astronomers for decades. Our galaxy, the Milky Way, is 10 billion years old and only about 100,000 light years across. Logically, any spacefaring race able to travel even at just one-thousandth of the speed of light would pervade the galaxy in just 100,000 years.

But repeated searches for signs of extraterrestrial intelligence have all failed. That, Dr Annis suggests, could be because although life may have arisen all over the galaxy in the past, it kept being wiped out by intense radiation from "gamma ray bursters" caused by the collision of superdense stars whose radiation could sterilise an entire planet in moments.

Police search for missing schoolgirls

MORE THAN 100 police officers with tracker dogs were searching yesterday for two 10-year-old girls from Hastings, in Sussex, who have not been seen since they set off on a 500-yard walk to school on Tuesday morning.

The parents of Lisa Hoodless and Charlene Lunnon appealed for their safe return and expressed concern that Christ Church girls' school had not rung to tell them their daughters did not arrive. Their worries were compounded when the police revealed that parents of all children at the school had been warned about a man seen loitering in the area.

Detective Superintendent Jeremy Paine, the detective who led the hunt for the killer of the Hastings teenager Billie Jo Jenkins, was drafted in yesterday to lead the hunt for the girls. He also expressed concern: "If they have no money or clothing, that's worrying as it's getting dark and because of the weather. Thirty-six hours is a long time for these two 10-year-olds to be away from home, and that worries me a lot. As time goes by it's more and more worrying, both to the parents and to us," he said.

For the past month Lisa and Charlene have walked to school together each morning after telling their parents they wanted to be "responsible". Philomena Lunnon, Charlene's

BY KATE WATSON-SMITH



Missing: Lisa Hoodless (top) and Charlene Lunnon

stepmother, said Charlene had been nervous of walking to school after they received the letter warning them about the man. "I told her she could walk to school in the mornings and I would pick her up after school because it was dark and she said that was fine," she said.

Her father, Keith, said the children were allowed to walk because the 10-minute route did not pass any major roads or wooded areas and because they were both "very streetwise".

But both sets of parents said they wanted an explanation about why they were not told earlier that their children had not arrived at school.

It was only when Julie Hoodless, Lisa's mother, arrived at 4pm to collect her daughter that she discovered neither child had been at school all day.

She said that every time her daughter had been too ill to attend school in the past, she had always telephoned the school immediately.

The school's headteacher, Anne Hanney, said that teachers would not have been aware that the girls had set off for school that morning. "We follow up all absences but you cannot do it the same day," she said.

Mrs Lunnon said: "Charlene was normally home by 3.45pm. When 4.45pm passed and when 5.30pm went, I knew that something was very, very wrong."

Lisa's father, Andrew, a gardener, appealed for her to come home yesterday. "We are very scared. She's never played truant before. She's a very happy girl, very bright and intelligent."

Both sets of parents insisted that neither girl had any problems either at home or at school.

IN BRIEF

Child sex attacker jailed for life

A PAEDOPHILE was jailed for life yesterday for a string of sex attacks on boys. Leeds Crown Court was told that Alan Evans, 23, was identified from security cameras after he raped a 13-year-old boy in the toilets of a Leeds store last August. He admitted the offence, the rape of a six-year-old boy in 1995 and a sample offence of indecent assault.

New man in Whelan press role

JOHN KINGMAN, an official who is head of the Treasury's productivity unit, has taken over as head of communications following the departure of Charlie Whelan. A new special adviser will be appointed "in due course". But the Treasury said there would be no direct replacement in that role for Mr Whelan.

Child dies of meningitis

A TODDLER who attended a BBC crèche in Wales died in hospital from suspected meningitis. Another child from the nursery is said to be stable in University Hospital, Cardiff. Up to 80 children and staff at the Acorns crèche near the BBC Llandaff studios have been given antibiotics as a precaution.

New hope on Lockerbie suspects

LIBYA COULD hand over the two men accused of the Lockerbie bombing within weeks, a key go-between said. South African envoy, Jakes Gerwel, said after talks with the Libyans that he detected a desire in Tripoli to conclude the affair "as speedily as possible".

Matchbox Merc fetches £4,100

A TOY car which cost less than three shillings (15p), sold at auction in London yesterday for £4,100. The Mercedes Benz 230SL, made in 1968, fetched a record price for a Matchbox toy because of its apple green colour used only in a trial.

Knoydart deal falls through

THE THEATRE impresario Sir Cameron Mackintosh has reluctantly backed away from a £650,000 deal to secure the future of the 70 settlers of Knoydart, an isolated mountainous knuckle on the west coast of Scotland.

Sir Cameron was said to be "close to tears" yesterday at the breakdown of negotiations to buy the 17,000-acre Knoydart estate in the Lochaber district of the Highlands, and lease it back to the community.

There were angry recriminations within the community-led Knoydart Foundation at the surprise turn of events. The sticking point for Sir Cameron, who owns the neighbouring Nevis estate, was the "right to buy" sought by residents and two conservation bodies, the John Muir Trust and the Brasher Trust, a land charity headed by Chris Brasher, the former Olympic athlete turned entrepreneur.

Sir Cameron's departure leaves the foundation £300,000 short of the asking price.

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Public schools accept drug culture

ONE IN THREE 14-year-olds in leading public schools has tried drugs and one in ten is a regular user, head teachers said yesterday.

A survey also showed that more than four out of ten sixth-formers have tried drugs.

The heads of the fee-paying schools who commissioned the survey are said to be "stunned" by these findings.

A report from the Headmasters' and Headmistresses' Conference argues that illegal drug-taking "is no longer limited to a disaffected and rebellious few. It is part of the culture of teenagers".

It suggests that schools should end the "zero option" of expelling pupils for all drug offences. Instead, they should concentrate on drug education and random tests for pupils suspected of using drugs.

While drugs are the greatest concern for heads of boarding schools, the report says, day school heads are more concerned about the use of alcohol. More than half of boarding schools, but only a quarter of day schools, reported that they

BY JUDITH JUDD
Education Editor

had at least one drug-related incident a year.

The heads recommend that senior pupils be issued with identity cards and that staff in all pubs and off-licences be urged to request to see them.

The survey of 2,400 pupils in 20 schools, carried out by the Schools Health Education Unit, found that slightly fewer 14-year-olds in public schools had used drugs than 14-year-olds in state schools. One in three heads expected to find as few as 5 per cent of their younger pupils had tried illegal drugs.

Only among girls is drug-taking more prevalent in private schools than in state schools. Cannabis is by far the most frequently used drug, and six out of ten pupils believe it is not harmful. Poppers come next but Ecstasy is very rare.

The report is firmly against the legalisation of cannabis and challenges pupils' belief that it is safe. But it argues that schools should be flexible. "While it is arguable that the

'zero option' approach of prohibition and threats may well have inhibited even greater proliferation, it is clear that, by itself, it will not stop or solve the problem. We emphasise that this is not a reason for abandoning it, particularly in schools which have confidence in it, but many schools are choosing to modify it."

Boarding schools take a tougher line than day schools. Just over half—compared with a fifth of day schools—expel students automatically for bringing drugs into school. Three-quarters of boarding schools—but less than a third of day schools—use drug testing.

Patrick Tobin, a past president of the conference, said both the police and the Government needed to do more to break the "chain of supply" of drugs to young pupils, usually outside of school. Mr Tobin, head of Stewart's Melville College and Mary Erskine School in Edinburgh, said: "If I pursue the drugs chain in Edinburgh, I find it almost unchecked. I see no evidence that the police are interested in the small fry."

Dr John Barrett, head of the Leys School, Cambridge, chaired the working party that produced the report. He uses the more flexible approach to drug-taking incidents, which increasing numbers of public schools are adopting.

"We say that if you are involved in drugs in any way then you are liable to be expelled. I would always expel someone for dealing in drugs. But we have some flexibility in the policy and I may use suspension for some pupils if I have reason to believe they feel they have made a serious mistake."

Dr Barrett secured the written agreement of all parents to conduct drug tests on those pupils suspected of taking drugs or those found in possession of drugs.

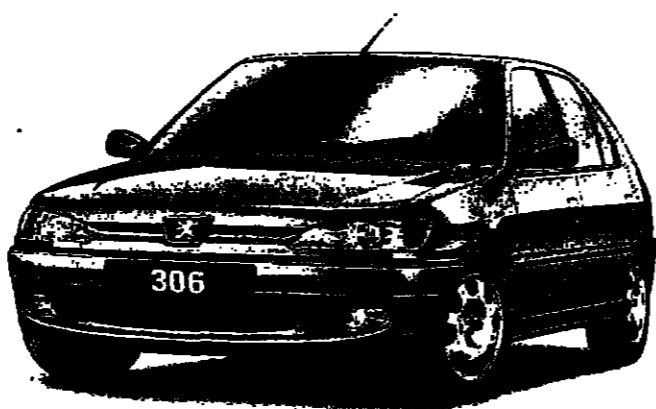
He said he would suspend a pupil who had used drugs and who had no previous record of drug-taking.

James Sabben-Clare, head of Winchester and this year's HMC chairman, said that any pupil involved with drugs was liable to be expelled but exceptions were made.



The Leys School in Cambridge takes a more flexible approach to punishing pupils guilty of taking drugs

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Move house to get medicine, says NHS chief

NHS PATIENTS who are denied the drugs they need because of "postcode rationing" should consider moving house to an area where the drugs are available, says the leader of Britain's NHS managers.

Stephen Thornton, chief executive of the NHS Confederation, said health migration, in which patients moved around the country in search of the drugs they needed, was a reality and to deny it was "unhelpful". Aids patients had gathered 10 years ago in north-west London, where the services were best. It was a natural response to an unsatisfactory situation.

"What the pressure groups should be doing is producing a directory of where you go if you want better services."

Mr Thornton's remarks are quoted in a report, *Hard Rations*, published yesterday by the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry (ABPI), which describes a "patchwork of medical fiefdoms across the country", each with its own rules about what drugs should be provided, but where the basis of the judgements is shrouded in secrecy.

Some health authorities are less generous than others in their provision of drugs. North-

By JEREMY LAURANCE
Health Editor

amptonshire will not pay for Taxol for first-line treatment of ovarian cancer and West Hertfordshire declines to fund cholesterol-lowering drugs except to patients who have already survived a heart attack.

A survey of 200 GPs conducted by NOP found almost six out of 10 said their patients did not always get the best available treatment, regardless of cost. Of these, over half said their local health authority had said it could not afford the treatment or had issued guidelines not to provide it.

Dr Trevor Jones, director-general of the ABPI, said: "The Government has steadfastly denied there is a need for rationing, but this survey shows that doctors are not prescribing the best treatment for patients—primarily on cost grounds. That is only rationing under another name."

The Department of Health said yesterday that the National Institute for Clinical Excellence, which starts work in April, would appraise new treatments, new drugs and new medical devices and issue "authoritative" guidance.

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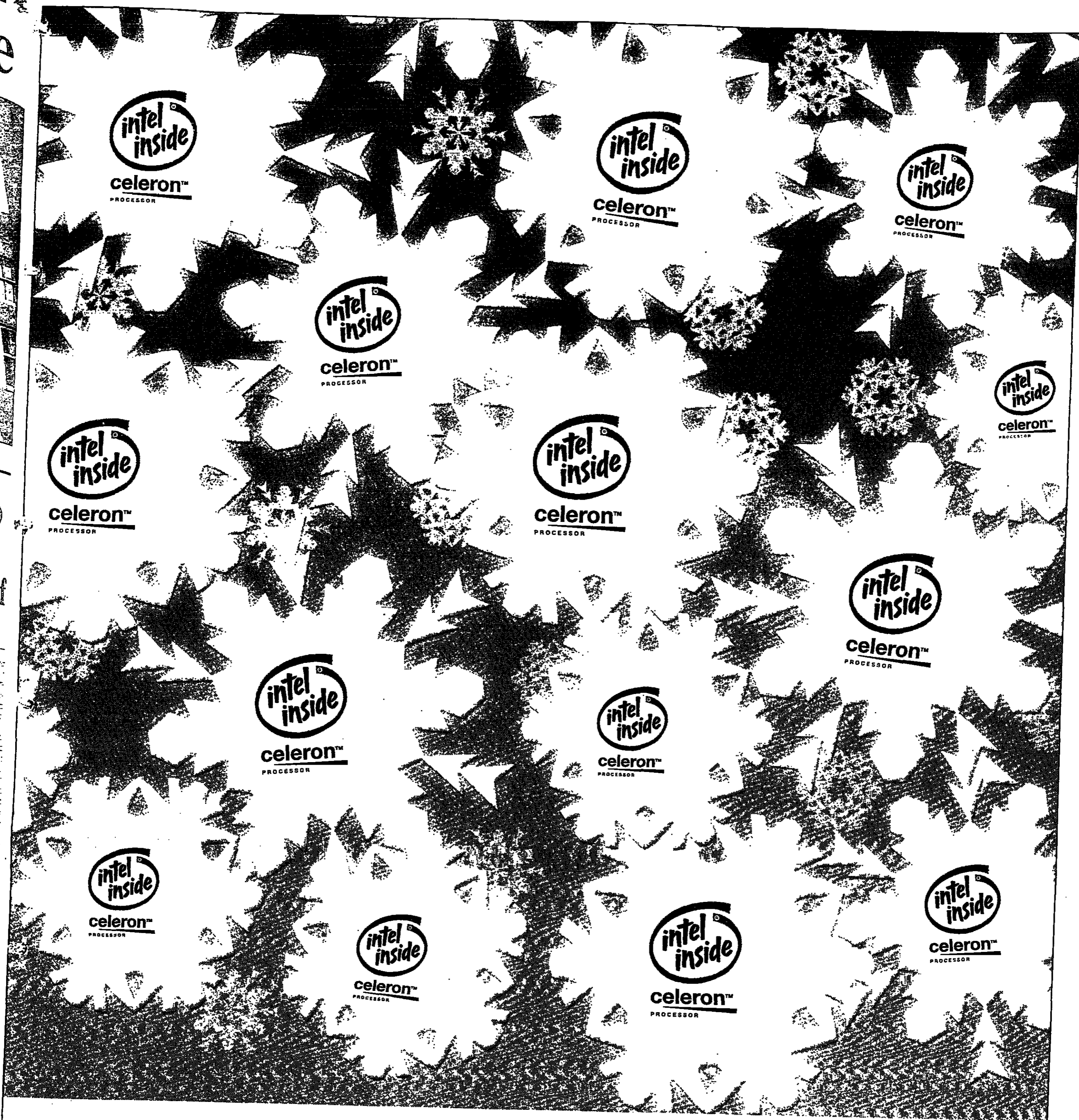
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Two men trying to pass on a narrow mountain ledge

"WOULD THE Prime Minister agree with me that this is a great day for democracy?" asked Gillian Merron, first up in Prime Minister's Questions. She was referring to the Government's White Paper on reform of the House of Lords but the more pious-minded might have felt her remark was incidentally borne out by the 15 minutes that followed, an uncharacteristically grave and courteous exchange between the party leaders. The less pious-minded might have asked for their money back. I felt a pang of sympathy for those in the public gallery, who must have felt as you do when you've set the video for The

Fast Show and get back to find that you've accidentally recorded a particularly dull passage of Newsnight. This sort of thing is all very well now and then, particularly if you worry about the intellectual reputation of the Mother of Parliaments, but if you care at all about attendance figures for Westminster's most popular cabaret session you would have to hope that aberrant rationality would soon pass.

It did, naturally – a Tory question about interest rates finally breaking the spell cast by the subject of Northern Ireland. As William Hague tried to persuade the House that the prisoner release programme should be suspended and Mr Blair insisted on the opposite they acted with the meticulous civility of two men trying to pass each other on a narrow mountain ledge. Lose your footing on a matter of bipartisan agreement and you look bad all the way down. But when Mr Blair was finally knocked back into default mode and pulled out the rubber truncheon ("No more boom and bust!") there was an eruption of pent-up mockery from Tory backbenchers. They had sat patiently through the violin duet but now the clowns were back on and they were determined to make up for lost time.

THE SKETCH



THOMAS SUTCLIFFE

peers were listening to Baroness Jay confirm their order of execution. In his reply to her statement Lord Strathclyde had expressed the hope

that they would be spared "trite and facile denigration of this House and its members", a plaintive request from the condemned that the tumbrel should travel in silence and that its occupants would not be pelted with ordure by the common mob. Baroness Young rose to note that this was a "very sad day for the House".

Baroness Young can imbue the word "modernisation" with such revision that you might imagine it was a sexual practice too disgusting for voluntary participation in it to be thinkable, but she was right about the melancholy of the occasion – a sense that for many peers

about his own future, it turned out but those of the long-serving staff. Baroness Jay reassured him that they would be fully employed looking after the life peers. Lord Gifford was almost the last to speak, asking whether the Royal Commission might consider renaming the Upper Chamber as the House of Senators and for the first time there was a faint murmur of revulsion from the Conservative benches. As it happened, Lord Strathclyde had already offered a better title for the awkward constitutional amphibian that will now painfully haul itself on to dry land – he called it Halfway House.

Hague calls for an end to early releases

THE TORIES came close to breaking the bi-partisan approach towards the Ulster peace process yesterday when William Hague told Tony Blair there should be no further early releases of prisoners unless a start was made on weapons decommissioning.

But while the Prime Minister agreed the recent wave of punishment beatings was "totally unacceptable", he said halting the early-release programme would wreck the Good Friday Agreement.

The exchanges followed a decision by Andrew Hunter, the Tory MP for Basingstoke, to postpone plans to "name and shame" the man he believes is the Omagh bombmaker after appeals for him to stay silent from Mo Mowlam, the Northern Ireland Secretary, and Sir Ronnie Flanagan, the RUC Chief Constable.

Mr Blair stressed at question time that a difficult balance of judgement had to be struck and far from trying to damage the Northern Ireland peace deal, "we are actually calling for the Good Friday Agreement to be implemented".

Mr Hague, however, told a

NORTHERN IRELAND

By SARAH SCHAEFER

Political Reporter

silent chamber of the case of Andrew Peden, who was tortured for 10 hours, left to die, lost both his legs, and "whose wife says he cries out every night as he relives what happened to him."

"Beatings like this are happening in increasing numbers, yet we are still releasing early prisoners belonging to the organisations responsible for these crimes. Would you agree these beatings are a breach of the Good Friday Agreement?" he asked Mr Blair.

The Prime Minister made clear punishment beatings had always been "a very difficult issue" which the previous government grappled with during the first IRA ceasefire.

Mr Hague said it was not right to compare earlier release schemes with the present one "because it was made very clear at the time that those who had committed the most heinous crimes would not be released until the first decade of the next century ..."

He said: "You told me on May

6 last year, 'It is essential that organisations that want to benefit from the early release ... should give up violence'. You pledged to the people of Northern Ireland that terrorists would have to bring an end to bombings, killings and beatings, progressive dismantling of paramilitary structures and full co-operation with the commission on decommissioning."

"Given that none of these things are yet happening ... isn't it time to stop the early release of terrorist prisoners?"

Amid Tory protests, the Prime Minister said: "You have to follow through the consequences of what you are saying. 'We believe, on balance, this judgement is correct. But I don't, in saying that, minimise the difficulty of it. But the consequence of taking the course you are advocating is more serious than you are saying.'"

Sir Ronnie Flanagan had said on Friday there was no doubt that all the organisations responsible for the beatings, including those who purport to be in cessation of military operations, were engaged in this "repugnant activity", Mr Hague told the Commons.



Michael Meacher, Environment minister, (right) and Derek Fatchett, Foreign Office minister, met at London Zoo yesterday to launch a campaign to end poaching of the 5,000 tigers left in the world

Protest motion on press 'sackings'

MEDIA

SIX TORY MPs signed a Commons Early Day Motion yesterday protesting at the "sackings at the Sunday Express". The motion was tabled by the former Daily Telegraph political correspondent and Sunday Telegraph social affairs editor Julie Kirkbride, now MP for Bromsgrove.

The motion states that the House "notes with concern the summary dismissal of Ian Walker, executive editor of the Sunday Express and the attempted demotion of Amanda Platell, executive editor of the Sunday Express". It says this happened "only weeks after the newspaper revealed details of the Right Honourable Member for Hartlepool's (Peter Mandelson's) trip to Brazil and his friendship with Reinaldo Avelar da Silva".

It states that the "proprietor of the Sunday Express, Labour peer and former adviser to the Right Hon Member for Hartlepool, exerted pressure on the editors of the Sunday Express to water down their story". That is a reference to Lord Hollick, chairman of the newspaper's owner, United News and Media. It calls on the Government "to support an open and free press and hopes there will be no further resignations from the Sunday Express".

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Unpasteurised cows' milk allowed to remain on sale

FANS OF unpasteurised "green-top" milk will be able to continue enjoying the drink after the Government announced yesterday it will not prohibit its sale.

The Agriculture Minister, Nick Brown, instead listed tougher measures to check hygiene standards of raw cows' drinking milk in an attempt to quell fears of health experts who believe it could be harmful.

Mr Brown said: "We have decided not to stop the drink's sale in England and Wales. However, we intend to introduce tighter checks to benefit consumers who choose to drink raw cows' drinking milk."

AGRICULTURE

By EILEEN MURPHY

The measures include increasing the frequency of tests of samples and production premises, which will begin immediately.

Producers will continue to pay for official checks while the retailers will have to give greater prominence to the statutory label warning that the milk may contain organisms harmful to health.

Labels must also include the Chief Medical Officer's advice that children, pregnant women, elderly people and

those who are unwell or have a chronic illness should not drink the milk.

The announcement follows more than a year of public consultation on proposals to ban green-top milk, which were recommended by the Advisory Committee on the Microbiological Safety of Food after surveys found food poisoning pathogens and evidence of faecal contamination.

The sale of the drink has been banned in Scotland since 1983 and will remain unavailable.

The Chartered Institute of Environmental Health said the U-turn was "inexplicable". It

had assumed the Government would follow the advice of its advisory committee and introduce a ban, particularly in light of the threat posed by emerging pathogens such as the deadly E. coli 0157.

The Consumers' Association, however, welcomed the Government's decision.

A spokesman said: "While there are valid concerns about the regular consumption of raw milk we believe these should be tackled by enforcing existing safety controls, clear labelling and making information about potential risks available for those choosing to drink it."

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Falconer 'suited to home job'

LORD FALCONER of Thoroton's ability to do "an excellent job" was his best qualification for being appointed Millennium Dome supreme, the Prime Minister said at Question Time.

Cabinet Office

Brian Bender will succeed Sir Robin Mowbray as the Permanent Secretary of the Cabinet Office, the Prime Minister announced.

Today's business

Commons: Trade and Industry questions. Road Traffic (NHS Charges) Bill, remaining stages. Scottish Enterprise Bill, second reading. Lords: Access to Justice Bill, committee. Social Security Benefits Up-rating Order. Social Security (Contributions) (Re-rating and National Insurance Fund Payments) Order.

GM food benefits 'outweigh risk'

GENETICALLY MODIFIED (GM) crops and food offer potential benefits that far outweigh their risks, as long as there is a proper regulatory framework in place, a House of Lords committee declared yesterday.

The European Communities committee called for a new committee to watch the effects of GM crops on agriculture, the environment and labelling on foods that contained more than a certain level of GM substances.

The report, to which the Government will have to respond, looked only at modification of plants, noting that the application of gene modification to animals "is at a much earlier stage" and raises different ethical issues. "Genetic modification, like any new technology (carries) risks and it should only be applied when they can be assessed and controlled," said Lord Reay, the chairman of the inquiry.

Baroness Young of Old Scone, the chairwoman of English Nature, added: "Everyone must be confident that GM crops will only be grown if there are adequate safeguards, properly enforced, for both

human health and the wider environment."

The committee also noted that the UK's rigorous regulatory structure meant that if the potato were discovered tomorrow, the Advisory Committee on Novel Foods and Practices would not license it, because under certain circumstances potatoes produce toxins. But Greenpeace said: "At no point did they ask what the justification is for allowing companies involved in the genetic engineering of foods to expose the public and the environment to the risks posed by it."

Friends of the Earth said the report contained errors of fact – about whether organic farmers could use GM crops – and was "intellectually confused".

Pete Riley, a food campaigner, called it "the wrong report, written at the wrong time, by the wrong people".

Ann Foster, for Monsanto, the biotechnology giant, said: "Clearly, we are now moving towards a sensible discussion of the science, and away from scare stories and myths."

THE HOUSE



Third World population

Ministers were urged to increase efforts to stem population growth in developing nations as the fifth anniversary of the Cairo conference on population and development approaches. Britain is yet to meet cash targets agreed then.

Driving danger

MPs called for tougher sentences for motorists who cause death by dangerous driving so they reflect the seriousness of the tragedy involved.

Attack on EU

Lord Lamont of Lerwick, the former Tory Chancellor, launched a fierce attack on the European Union yesterday, claiming it would never be democratic because it was not a nation.

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Peers warned 'don't look for a fight'

THE GOVERNMENT warned the 750 hereditary peers last night that it would scrap plans to grant 91 of them a temporary reprieve if they launched a "pitched battle" against the Bill to abolish their right to sit and vote in the Lords.

Unveiling the Government's two-stage plan for radical reform of the second chamber, Margaret Beckett, the Leader of the Commons, announced that ministers would accept the compromise agreed by Tony Blair and Viscount Cranborne, which led to his sacking by William Hague as Tory leader in the Lords last month.

Mrs Beckett told MPs the Government would back the Cranborne plan if it enabled reform to proceed by consent, but warned: "It is not a concession to be extracted by pitched battle. Indeed, pitched battle will jeopardise the proposal."

The Bill to scrap the 800-year-old rights of the hereditaries, published yesterday, revealed that they would keep their titles and that, once they were removed from the Upper House, they could vote and stand in general elections.

The Bill confirmed that the five hereditary peers in the Royal Family - the Prince of Wales and the Dukes of Edinburgh, York, Gloucester and Kent - would no longer be able to sit in the Lords. But Downing Street insisted the move did not signal any change to Britain's hereditary monarchy.

Ending the hereditaries' rights forms stage one of the Government's plan. In a White Paper yesterday, ministers revealed their thinking on the second stage, which they hope to have approved by Parliament before the next general election.

The present House of Lords would probably be replaced by a partly elected, partly appointed second chamber. Although the White Paper did not set out a blueprint for how the members of the new chamber would be chosen, it suggested ministers were attracted by a "mixed system", which avoided either a wholly elected or appointed House.

BY ANDREW GRICE
Political Editor

eminent" and that the Upper House "must not usurp or threaten the supremacy of the first chamber". It said that a fully elected Lords would risk provoking conflict.

The tone suggested that Mr Blair is unlikely to back demands from Labour left-wingers and the Liberal Democrats for a predominantly elected second chamber. Ministers said that having some members appointed would safeguard the position of the cross-bench independent peers, who they say play a valuable role.

Ministers revealed that some members could be "indirectly elected" by the new assemblies being set up in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and the planned regional bodies for England. They believe this would help to allay fears that the devolution plans could weaken the Union.

Yesterday, ministers refused to be drawn on the balance between nominated and elected peers. They said that would depend on the functions and powers of the House, on which they would take final decisions after studying the recommendations of a Royal Commission, to be chaired by Lord Wakeham, the former Tory cabinet minister and chairman of the Press Complaints Commission.

Gerald Kaufman, Labour MP for Gorton, will also serve on the Royal Commission.

The White Paper promised "a modern, fit and effective second chamber of Parliament for the 21st century". It said the Government would "make every effort to ensure that the second stage of reform has been approved by Parliament by the time of the general election".

But the Tories and some Labour MPs expressed scepticism that Mr Blair would stick to such a fast timetable. In the 500-member "transitional House", the Government said that no political party should have a majority. Mr Blair is likely to appoint about 50 new Labour life peers to give his party parity with the Tories, whose hereditaries currently enjoy a 3-1 advantage.

To answer the charge he will pack the Lords with "Tony's cronies", Mr Blair is giving up some powers of patronage. A new, independent Appointments Commission will appoint crossbenchers and invite nominations for people's peers.

The Royal Commission, which will report by the end of this year, will consider an enhanced role for the Lords in scrutinising EU legislation.

Although the Government will review the position of the law lords, this will fall outside the Royal Commission's remit. The Church of England bishops will remain, but ministers will look at ways of increasing the representation of other religious traditions.

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A Bill to strip hereditary peers of their rights and a Royal Commission on the Lords announced yesterday will change life for these peers

Tories attack 'half-baked' reform

LORD STRATHCLYDE, the Tory Leader in the Lords, spoke yesterday of his disquiet about the Government's proposals for a transitional Upper Chamber, saying they marked a "sad day" for Parliament.

Launching his attack during the statement on Lords reform, he criticised the Government for failing to treat peers with the courtesy they deserved. "There is a deep sense of disquiet and regret about what you have announced, not because we always want to be as we are or where we are. We do not."

"Are we not entitled to know in the long run where we are heading? We have seen no clear vision of the future for this House of Parliament, and to say it is modernisation is simply not enough."

While welcoming the Royal Commission and the prospect of Lord Weatherill's amendment to retain 91 hereditaries until stage two, Lord Strathclyde, himself a hereditary peer, warned the Bill could bring to end the delicate balance between the two Houses of Parliament that had served Britain well.

"We are not opposed to reform, but we do oppose these half-baked and self-seeking proposals masquerading as reform. What we will also ques-

tion are gimmicks masquerading as solutions."

He was joined by Baroness Young, a Tory peer, who urged the Government to make "genuine" progress towards stage two of the reform. "Otherwise we end up with a transitional chamber dressed up in the new buzzword 'modernisation' and ... legislation reminiscent of a sixth-form debate."

Viscount Cranborne, who was sacked as Leader of the Lords by William Hague for accepting the deal to keep the 91 hereditaries, regretted the Government was not reforming the Upper Chamber in "one fell swoop". In the Commons, Tony Benn, the Labour MP for

Chesterfield who relinquished his peerage to sit in the Commons, voiced concern about government plans to accept the Weatherill amendment.

"Short term hereditary peers will rub shoulders with nominated people's peers who will have a job for life. We are entitled to an elected Parliament," he said.

Kenneth Clarke, the former Tory chancellor, accused the Government of having embarked on Lords reform with "no policy" at all.

"Ministers are hoping the Royal Commission will come up with one. But not so quickly as to interfere with the Government's legislative timetable for

the remainder of this Parliament," he said.

Donald Anderson, Labour MP for Swansea East, said Parliament should guard against the Lords becoming a "retired persons' home for politicians".

Dennis Skinner, MP for Bolsover, argued the Royal Commission was a mistake. "We have got a parliament for Scotland, we are going to have a Welsh assembly, they're going to have another in Northern Ireland, in a few years there is going to be one in every region of England. Why on earth do we need a second Chamber at all? Adopt the Third Way - and get rid of it."

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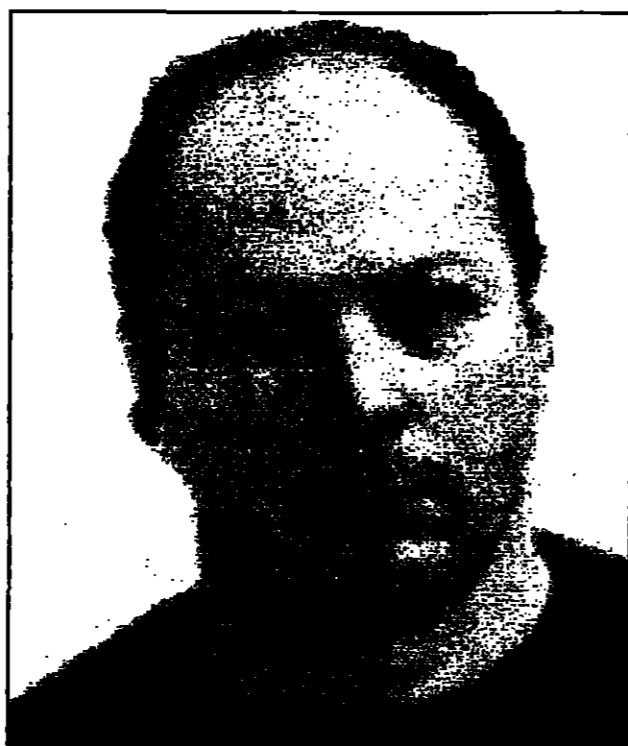
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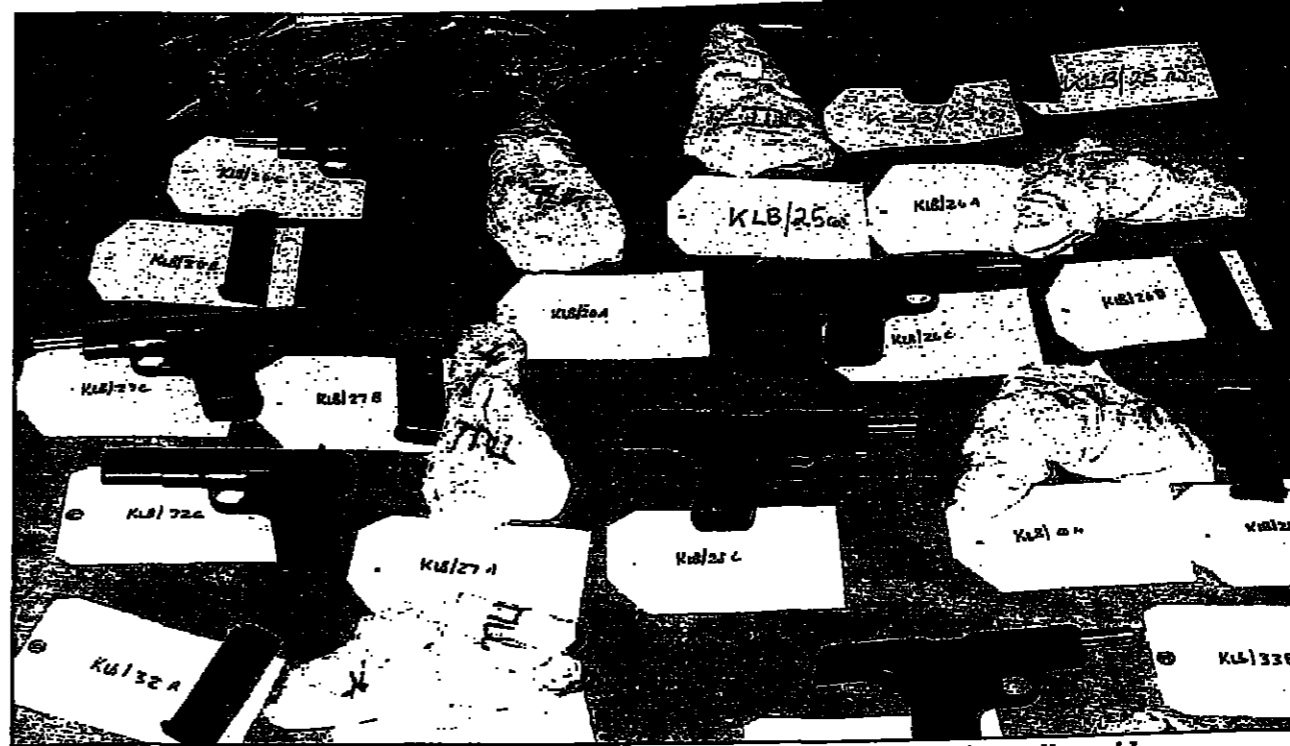
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Gangland guns sold by bogus police officer



Former Special Constable Anthony Mitchell, left, pleaded guilty to five counts of dealing in firearms that had been seized from criminals after police raids



A FORMER Special Constable with a penchant for Harley-Davidson motorbikes makes an unlikely quatermaster to one of the country's most prolific suppliers of illegal guns. Nevertheless, police have netted a key figure in the underworld of firearms dealing.

BY JASON BENNETTO
Crime Correspondent

counts of illegal firearms dealing and possession, has been linked with the seizure of 130 guns from crime scenes. They had been used for murders, shootings against police officers and in gang wars.

For years Mitchell churned out firearms at his workshop in an industrial estate in Hove, East Sussex. Almost all the dozens – possibly hundreds – of guns he supplied were supposed to have been deactivated. That is, they had been disabled so that they could not be fired but were “ornaments” for enthusiasts. The inquiry that led to Mitchell's conviction

also found his interest in guns further afield: he was in a group of impostors who travelled the world, pretending to be British police officers so that they could enter shooting competitions.

He first came to the attention of the former South East Regional Crime Squad – now the National Crime Squad – three

years ago. He was first named as a firearms dealer after a joint police and MI5 operation in 1997 that caught Paul Ferris, a criminal with a reputation for extreme violence, buying guns from John Ackerman, another dealer, from a street in Islington, north London.

In an Opel Fronto box police found three US 9mm MAC-10 sub-machine-guns. A favourite weapon of US crack gangs, and known as “Big Macs”, they can fire 1,200 rounds a minute. Police also found silencers, ammunition and detonators. Ackerman, later jailed for six years, turned informer and named Mitchell as the source of the guns.

He was arrested in July 1997 but freed him after a search at the Hove workshop failed to find illegal guns.

But officers from the National Crime Squad, assisted by the Organised Crime Unit at Scotland Yard and Strathclyde Police, set up a surveillance operation and kept tabs on one of Mitchell's associates, who was found to have 2.7kg of plastic explosives, two shotguns and a sub-machine-gun at his home.

Mitchell used the fact that he did not have a criminal record to set himself up as a legitimate supplier of licensed firearms to gun clubs and collectors.

But his secret work brought in the real money. As an engineer he developed a technique to reactivate firearms that were supposed to be permanently out of action.

He obtained a ready supply of deactivated guns from shops and mail-order firms. His speciality, or trademark weapon, was the MAC-10, which he reactivated by fitting a new barrel and breech block.

Police tests identified more than 100 MAC-10s – seized in Liverpool, Manchester, Glasgow, London, and south-east England – as being supplied by Mitchell. As well as MAC-10s, which cost £1,100 each including a silencer and 120 rounds, there were revolvers and pistols, costing £400 to £500.

One of the weapons is believed to have been used for a street murder in Brixton, south London, in April 1997. Another was fired by a youth in Manchester at police officers in the Moss Side district.

Others were found during raids on drug strongholds in

Manchester. Mitchell was re-arrested in October 1997 and 50 MAC-10s were found at his workshop.

Police discovered during a search of his run-down terrace house in Brighton that their target shared his fascination for firearms with a group of gun groupies.

With up to 12 other men Mitchell was part of a pseudo-SAS-style organisation known as the Black Sheds, who dressed in black boiler-suits and webbing. The men had fake police identification cards, which they used to travel the world, including the United States, Germany, the Netherlands and Belgium, entering police shooting competitions. Videos and photographs were discovered of them competing for, and on occasions winning, trophies.

The police also discovered that Mitchell had been thrown out of the Sussex Police's volunteer uniformed Specials in 1993 after his gun connections came to light.

After Mitchell's guilty pleas at the Old Bailey in London on Tuesday he was remanded in custody and will be sentenced on 19 February, when he could get a maximum jail term of 10 years.

Detective Constable Cliff Purvis, of the National Crime Squad, said: “Some of the weapons which bore the Mitchell ‘signature’ mark have been used in killings and to fire at police.”

“I'm sure he was one of the major contributors to illegal firearms in this country – he was a big fish, there's no question of that.”

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NATIONAL SAVINGS

Meat shortage fears in strike test for Blair

THE SUPPLY of meat to shops faces severe disruption after slaughterhouse inspectors voted yesterday to strike, sparking what will be the first national dispute between public servants and the Government.

Union leaders warned that the stoppages would have an immediate impact on supplies and attacked the Government for interfering in pay negotiations.

While the industrial action, due to start within the next fortnight, will involve only 1,000 inspectors it will be difficult to process meat for human consumption without them. They voted for a series of one, two and three-day strikes. The inspectors examine beef, lamb, pork and poultry carcasses before they are released from abattoirs and sold to supermarkets and butchers.

The conflict is a key test of ministers' attitudes towards unions and comes when relations between union leaders and Tony Blair seemed to be improving. Senior officials at the public service union Unison complained that the Treasury and the Cabinet Office intervened in talks at the eleventh hour last year to insist that there should be no salary increase unless there was a productivity agreement. Despite a government commitment to “social partnership”, the union has not been invited to talks over staffing.

In the result announced yesterday – and predicted in *The Independent* – some 61 per

cent of Unison members employed by the Meat Hygiene Service voted for action in a turnout of 57 per cent – relatively high for such a ballot.

Keith Sonnet, assistant general secretary of the union, called for fresh talks with management, but warned that industrial action would begin before 2 February unless there was a satisfactory settlement. Inspectors will be called out on a 24-hour strike initially, but the stoppages will then be extended to last two and three days.

The 12-month-old dispute is over a 3.65 per cent increase on basic wages imposed on the inspectors by management after negotiations broke down last year. The union is seeking an increase of at least 4.7 per cent to match rises elsewhere in the Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Food. Employees' representative initially claimed a rise of 5 per cent or £550 a year, whichever was greater.

The officials are paid a maximum of £15,000 basic salary, but can earn up to £25,000 if they work 60 hours a week.

Johnston McNeill, chief executive of the Meat Hygiene Service, has written to local authorities urging them to deploy environmental health officers to abattoirs in the event of walk-outs. However, most of the council employees are Unison members and are being urged not to break the strikes.

I.Q. of 145 and Can't Remember?

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Smith: Ours is the best millennium

BRITAIN'S PLANS for celebrating the millennium are the most ambitious in the world, Chris Smith said yesterday. But the festivities will not succeed unless the British people throw their hearts into them, warned the Secretary of State for Culture.

More than £2bn is being spent by the Millennium Commission on projects that will open across the country at a rate of one a week from now until the end of 2000.

Mr Smith said the celebrations would make the UK the "global capital of the millennium" and earn it more than £2.5bn from increased tourism.

"The scale and quality of the enterprise... is unparalleled," he said. "We've got further, faster in preparing for this year of celebration than any other country, and every time I go around the world, meeting my colleagues in other governments, they say how much they admire what we have done."

But with preparations in place and with less than a year to go, Mr Smith said the British people had to support the am-

BY LOUISE JURY

bitious plans. "The millennium is nothing if it does not carry a significance in people's hearts. People will not get involved in activities just for the sake of it," he said. "They will do so because they realise that the millennium is an extraordinary moment in time and, as such, offers the ideal opportunity to undertake something new, positive and interesting."

Mr Smith said that he was "absolutely confident" the Millennium Dome and the Jubilee Line underground extension, which is due to carry hundreds of thousands of visitors to the Dome, would be completed in time.

He said the Dome accounted for only one-fifth of the Millennium Commission's spending. There was one capital project for every 30 square miles of the country, including the Dynamic Earth visitor centre on geology and evolution in Scotland, which was awarded £15m, and a national space science centre in Leicester, which was granted £23.2m. Smaller

awards of about £2,000 are to be given to more than 40,000 people for local educational, environmental and community projects. Some of the first recipients will meet the Prime Minister today.

The British economy was also benefiting from the jobs boost created by many of the projects, Mr Smith said. Two thousand people are building the Dome, for example, and another 5,000 will be employed during the year it is open.

The Secretary of State for Culture was speaking to an audience representing organisations preparing for year 2000 celebrations. It was his first appearance with his full team of millennium ministers, including Lord Falconer of Thoroton, Peter Mandelson's successor in charge of the Dome project.

"We have just 346 days to get it right, but I am absolutely sure we will," Mr Smith said. Figures from the British Tourist Authority predict that the annual total of overseas visitors will increase from 25.5 million in 1997 to 27.5 million in 2000, spending £14.7bn.



The Secretary of State for Culture, Chris Smith, says he is 'absolutely confident' the Millennium Dome will be ready by 2000

John Voos

WHAT ABOUT THE REST?

US: Has founded the White House Millennium Council to celebrate the accomplishments of "this American century" and convey its heritage to future generations. Plans include: Connecting every classroom to the Internet; three-year preservation plan for the national archives; a free, year-long artistic festival at the Kennedy Center; tripling the size of the Peace Corps volunteers global learning partnership programme.

Australia: Millennium postponed to 2001 because of the Sydney Olympics in 2000; massive waterfront party planned for New Year's Eve.

New Zealand: Celebrations are focused on the east coast town of Gisborne, on the North Island, where the first sunrise of 2000 (after the tiny nearby island of Pitt) will be over Mount Hikurangi. Events include: A Pacific tall ships festival; a 1,000km First To The Sun bicycle ride for 2,000 people from Auckland to Gisborne; a festival of Maori culture and contemporary music. In Auckland, the city's millennium project group is staging a series of concerts.

Germany: No special celebrations planned.

Brazil: Extra spectacular fireworks display on Copacabana beach.

France: The state is setting aside 400 million francs (about £36m), boosted with money from local authorities and business sponsors to celebrate. Plans include: A mass picnic on Bastille Day; a series of science seminars; concerts along the length of the Paris ringroad; grants to 10 young inventors.

Fate of 'Alcatraz' prison in doubt

THE FUTURE of the £3m unit designed to hold the most dangerous prisoners in England and Wales was hanging in the balance last night after a legal challenge by two inmates.

A London High Court judge reserved judgment after hearing that two armed robbers had been sent "unlawfully and unfairly" to the unit at Woodhill prison, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire, which is known as "Alcatraz".

Lawyers for Rifat Mehmet and Sean O'Connor said Woodhill's close supervision centre had been described as a "brutalising environment". The basic regime forces prisoners to use cardboard mattresses and go without books and other personal possessions. All privileges must be earned by good behaviour.

If the inmates are successful in their legal challenge the Prison Service will be forced to conduct an overhaul of how the unit is used and which offenders are referred there.

The conditions have concerned Sir David Ramsbotham, the Chief Inspector of

BY IAN BURRELL
Home Affairs Correspondent

Prisons, and Stephen Shaw, the director of the Prison Reform Trust, who described them as "barren" and "cruel".

Mehmet and O'Connor are serving 27 years and 12 years respectively. The unit also houses notorious prisoners such as the hostage-taker Charles Bronson, who changed his name to that of the American actor, and the kidnapper Michael Sams.

The court was told Mehmet spent 23 hours a day locked in his cell. A psychiatrist had concluded that his continued detention in the unit would "produce psychotic symptoms in the extreme".

The centre, which was opened last February, is combined with two other units at Hull and Durham prisons to provide 53 places for the most violent inmates, with about 30 held at Woodhill.

Outside the High Court, Phil Wheatley, a senior Prison Service official, said the unit was becoming "better and safer".

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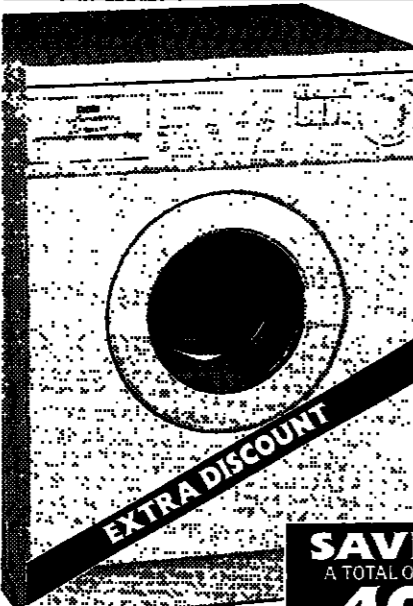
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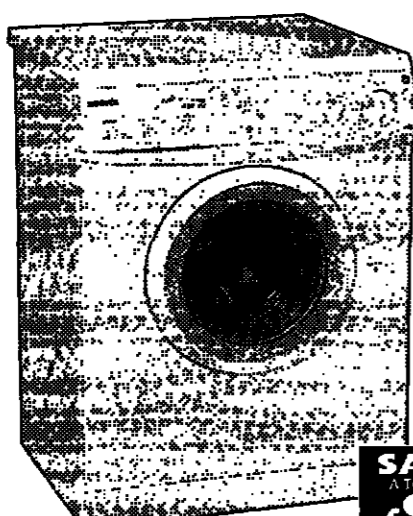
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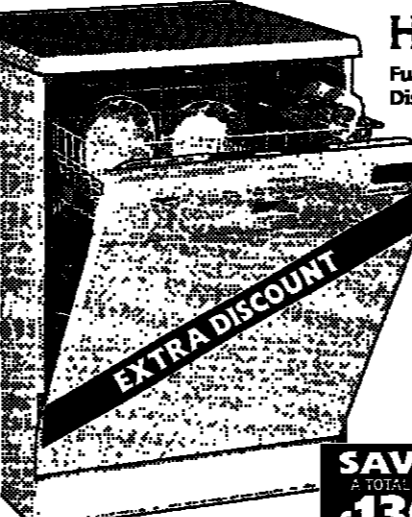
ZANUSSI 1200 Spin Washer Dryer Model W151397W.
Was £549.99.
In-store Price £479.99.
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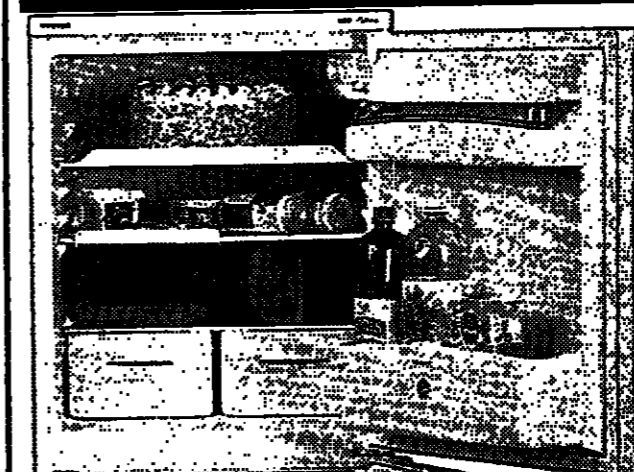
LG 4.1 cu.ft. Upright Freezer
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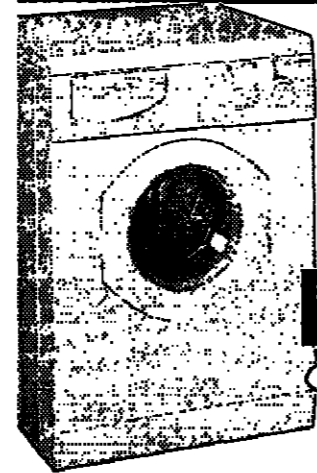
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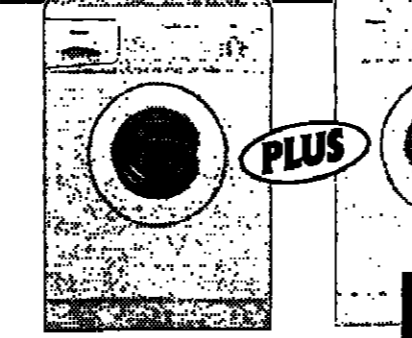
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THE INDEPENDENT Thursday 21st

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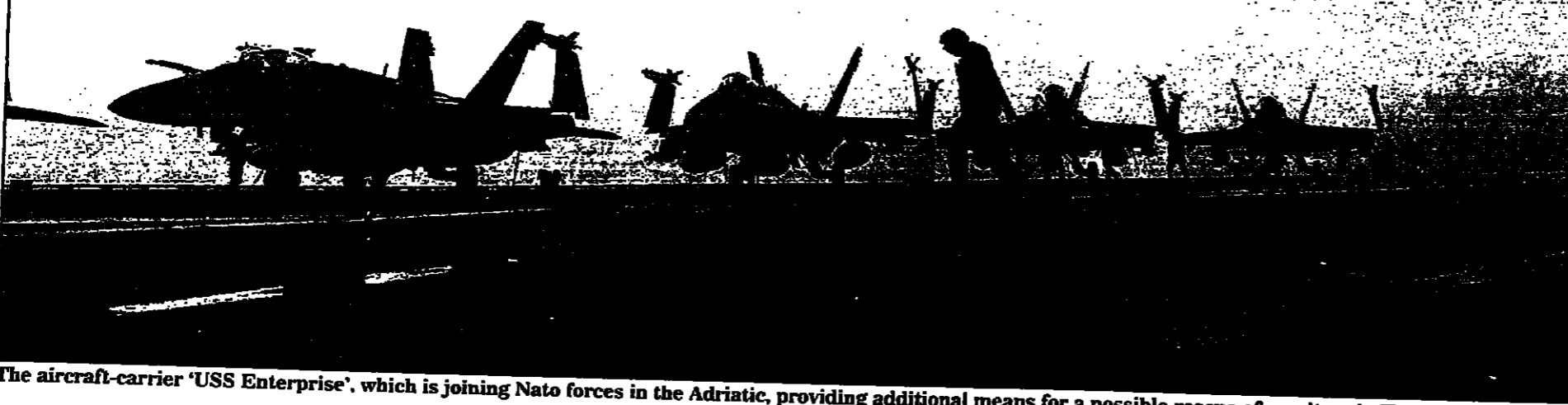
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The aircraft-carrier 'USS Enterprise', which is joining Nato forces in the Adriatic, providing additional means for a possible rescue of monitors in Kosovo

Allies cautious as Nato forces gather in Adriatic



DESPITE YESTERDAY'S announcement of the despatch of more ships and warplanes to the Adriatic and a halving of the readiness time for air attacks, there is still some way to go before the West resorts to force against President Milosevic to end the Kosovo crisis.

The arrival in particular of Nato's Strike Force South, including the US aircraft-carrier Enterprise, will increase allied firepower and provide additional means for rescuing the 700 monitors from the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) in Kosovo before any military action. But British officials said "this does not mean that air strikes are imminent."

The mood is different from October, when B-52 bombers

BY RUPERT CORNWELL

had their engines running, waiting to take off from British airfields. Acutely conscious of the lack of a "day-after" strategy, the major powers are today stressing more vigorously the need for a political solution - even though that has never looked more remote.

The dilemma is simple but deadly: what happens when you have bombed Yugoslav army installations and equipment, and perhaps solidified Serb popular support behind Mr Milosevic, while hastening Kosovo's moves towards the full independence which you absolutely do not want?

Thus the "twin-track" approach, as it is now being packaged: the pursuit of a political

settlement and simultaneous preparation of military action should all else fail. And, as Tony Blair acknowledged yesterday for the first time, this might have to include deployment of Nato ground troops.

But the underlying question is the same as when the ethnic Albanian insurrection in Kosovo burst upon the world's attention almost a year ago: will Mr Milosevic make the political concessions necessary to avert the use of force?

There are three immediate demands of the Yugoslav president: he must permit outside investigation of the massacre at Racak, rescind the expulsion order against William Walker, head of the monitors, and reduce his forces in Kosovo to the levels of February 1998, as stipulated in the October ceasefire deal with the US envoy Richard Holbrooke.

At the time, that part of the agreement was never spelt out precisely, but Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, told the Commons this week that 12 army and special police companies were "out of barracks" (ie in the field, suppressing ethnic Albanian "terrorists"), compared with a maximum of three companies agreed in October.

The next acid test of Mr Milosevic's intentions comes today, when he is to meet Knut Vollebæk, the Norwegian Foreign Minister and chairman of OSCE. He will stress that the

50-odd member-countries all approved Mr Walker's appointment, and were adamant he should stay on.

As the military track proceeds, so does the diplomatic. Officials from the Contact Group of leading powers will discuss the crisis in London tomorrow, and shortly thereafter their ministers will meet. Only then, at the earliest, would military strikes be undertaken.

But, as in October, the group is divided. The US is the most forthright in threatening military action, while Russia remains adamantly opposed. Britain, France, Germany and Italy are somewhere in between. Now as then, hope persists in European capitals that Moscow, whose deputy foreign minister is in Belgrade, will have some influence on the Yugoslav leader.

But few nurture illusions: "Milosevic will push to the very brink before giving ground," one diplomat predicted after the alliance's top generals came back empty-handed from Belgrade on Tuesday.

And what, for instance, if he permits Mr Walker to stay, and even allows in war-crimes investigators - but presses on with his crackdown none the less? Would that satisfy the West? Only one thing is certain: that no one is more skilled than Mr Milosevic at playing upon his opponent's own divisions and uncertainties.

Monitor stays while Serbs attack villages

BY PAUL WOOD

A DEFIANT William Walker, head of the International Monitoring Mission in Kosovo, returned to his headquarters yesterday apparently intent on ignoring a Yugoslav order to leave the country later today.

"It's good to be back," Mr Walker declared as he arrived in the regional capital, Pristina. He had earlier been advised by the chairman of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Knut Vollebæk, that it would be wrong to give in to the Yugoslavs "outrageous provocation".

But as Mr Walker strode into his office, ethnic Albanian refugees were fleeing the latest outbreak of fighting. Serbian special police units clashed with the rebel Kosovo Liberation Army near the town of Mitrovica.

Reporters saw the bodies of two ethnic Albanians. One was covered with ammunition belts, and a machine gun lay by his side. The other was carrying a pistol.

Rebels said they opened fire after Serb forces shelled the nearby village of Vraganica. Dozens of frightened ethnic Albanian civilians fled the fighting aboard horse-drawn carts as the two sides exchanged semi-automatic and machine

gun fire. The Serb media also reported that a Serb mother and her two children were injured before dawn yesterday when a mortar exploded on their home in a village near Sijolje. One child, a 14-year-old girl, was seriously wounded.

Refugees were last night struggling through knee deep winter mud across the hillsides in central Kosovo. One woman carried a young child on her shoulders. As KLA fighters went the other way many of the refugees made victory signs.

"The police came early in the morning," one distraught woman said. "We didn't have time to get clothes for children. We just ran." Everywhere there was hope that NATO would intervene, along with disappointment about the international community's actions so far.

"We expected to have to suffer for a free Kosovo," said one KLA fighter, "but we did not expect to be betrayed by the West."

The chief U.N. war crimes prosecutor, Louise Arbour, left neighbouring Macedonia yesterday for The Hague, Netherlands, after having been refused permission twice in two days to enter Yugoslavia.

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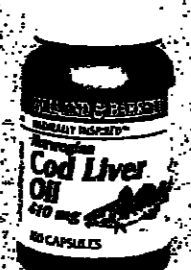
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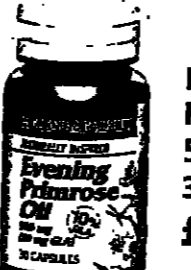
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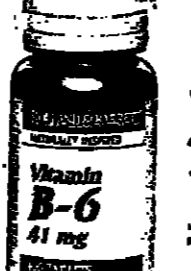


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Clinton adulation eclipses the trial

STILL ON trial in the Senate for his job and his legacy, President Bill Clinton was riding higher yesterday than at almost any other time in his six-year presidency after a triumphant State of the Union address on Tuesday night and an impressive defence from his lead lawyer, Charles Ruff, in the Senate that afternoon. As his lawyers prepared for the second day of his Senate defence, opinion polls showed his job approval rate soaring, to 70 per cent and higher.

Basking in the adulation of his friends and the grudging admiration of many foes, Mr Clinton turned his back on Washington politics for the day and flew to New York State and Pennsylvania to take his message of a strong America, more energised – as he put it – and more prosperous than ever, direct to the people.

But even as he left Wash-

BY MARY DEJEVSKY AND
ANDREW MARSHALL
in Washington

ington, one of the key policy proposals in his State of the Union address was coming under attack from Alan Greenspan, chairman of the Federal Reserve Board. Questioned by members of Congress at a House committee hearing, Mr Greenspan said he opposed any measure that would lead to funds from the United States state pension scheme being invested in stock markets. Mr Clinton had suggested that a part of the massive budget surplus be put into stocks to help to head off the system's bankruptcy as the baby-boom generation reached retirement.

Mr Greenspan said he believed that investment by the Government would cause big problems for the stock market. "Because I do not believe that

it is politically feasible to insulate such huge funds from a governmental direction, I'm fearful that we will use those assets in a way which will create a lower rate of return – but even a greater concern, that it will create sub-optimal use of our capital resources and those assets which create our standard of living," he said.

Mr Greenspan's remarks indicated an unusual divergence of opinion between the two men who are jointly credited with the unprecedented run of growth enjoyed by the US in recent years. Even though the ideas set out in the State of the Union address are presidential intentions rather than national policy, and must be enshrined in Bills or the Budget and submitted to the Congress for approval, such an early rejection of a proposal from so authoritative a source is rare.

Outside Washington, how-

ever, the fine print of Mr Clinton's address was less significant than the overall impression it created: of a supremely confident President at the peak of his authority, exulting in the successes of his term and a half in office.

There was no hint of any concern about the fact that his audience contained the more than 200 Representatives responsible for his impeachment – in that very Chamber – or the 100 Senators who are his jurors by day on the other side of the Capitol. Although the constitutional process set in train by the allegations about Mr Clinton and Monica Lewinsky a year ago is now in its final, and crucial, stage, there seemed not a cloud on the President's horizon. Some even feared that his very self-assurance might turn the Senate against him: "He is almost taunting them," one commentator said.



White House counsel Cheryl Mills in August, during the early days of the Lewinsky investigation

Reuters

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Law team 'looks like America'

BY MARY DEJEVSKY

WHEN BILL CLINTON first came to office, he promised a Cabinet that "looks like America" in its inclusion of women and ethnic minorities. Six years later, while he may not have fulfilled that promise to the letter, he has appointed more women and non-whites to his staff than any President before him. And when the White House legal team embarked yesterday on the second day of the President's defence before the Senate, it was Cheryl Mills, a 33-year-old black woman, who took the floor.

She was the only black person, and one of barely a dozen women, in the whole of the Senate Chamber. Now Deputy White House counsel, she has served in the President's legal team since Mr Clinton was elected and is friendly with two of the key witnesses in the Monica Lewinsky investigation: Mr Clinton's personal secretary, Betty Currie, and the suave businessman Vernon Jordan, who used his influence to find Ms Lewinsky a job.

She is regarded as devoted to the Clintons, and has attracted ferocious criticism from some Republicans who accuse her of misleading a House committee when she testified about the so-called Filegate scandal: the investigation into how confidential FBI files found their way to the White House and whether they were misused by the Clinton campaign.

Ms Mills is one of two women in the presidential legal team. The other is Nicole Seligman, 42, who was one of Oliver North's lawyers during the Iran-Contra scandal, and respected as a highly accomplished lawyer in her own right, with a rapier wit.

Adding to the impression of "diversity" in the Clinton defence team is the White House chief counsel, Charles Ruff, who gave the opening statement on Tuesday from his wheelchair. Mr Ruff – who, like Mr Clinton, is of humble origins – is a former Watergate prosecutor and lawyer for Anita Hill in her landmark sexual harassment case against the Supreme Court nominee, Clarence Thomas. He has been crippled since contracting polio in Africa in his youth.

Mr Clinton's team also includes two of the Clintons' Yale Law School contemporaries – Gregory Craig, who opened yesterday's session – and David Kendall, Mr Clinton's personal lawyer, a man of Quaker up-

bringing and dour manner, lightened with occasional flashes of ultra-dry humour.

But overall the group gathered round the defence table presents a sharp contrast with the rest of the hall, which is a sea of men of a certain age and caste, all of them white, and most of them greying in a distinguished manner.

There are only 10 women senators (out of 100) and no blacks, while the 435-member House of Representatives is scattered with black, brown and female faces. The 13-strong



Charles Ruff (above) and Nicole Seligman



team of prosecutors from the House of Representatives, while varied in age (from 40 to 74) and background, is all male and all white.

However, the fate of Mr Clinton's defence rests with the Senate, and today's summing up will be given by a newly co-opted member of the team – the just-retired Democratic senator from Arkansas, Dale Bumpers. Silver-haired and distinguished, a reputed orator in the old style, Mr Bumpers is a senator's senator.

The White House clearly judged that if it was to win over the Senate, it had to field someone who looked and behaved more like the Senate than the America of today.

IN BRIEF

Four held over Delhi 'bomb plot'

INDIAN POLICE said yesterday they had arrested four people for allegedly planning to bomb the United States embassy in Delhi and two of its consulates. One of the men was Sayed Abu Nasir, a Bangladeshi.

Help for survivors of Leningrad

THE RUSSIAN Prime Minister, Yevgeny Primakov, pledged 35 million roubles (£1m) yesterday for survivors of the 900-day Nazi blockade of Leningrad during the Second World War.

Fugitive found after 25 years

A MAN who fled from a jail in Virginia after serving two days of a one-year sentence for selling marijuana worth \$10 25 years ago pleaded guilty yesterday to escape. He faces up to five years in prison.

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New NF prepares to oust Le Pen

THROUGH THE office door, there came the sound of cinematic, martial music, a bit like Wagner's *Ring Cycle* remixed for *Star Wars*. When she emerged, Bruno Mégret's secretary said, apologetically: "We are doing trials for Saturday."

"Saturday" is, to be an occasion for reach-me-down demagoguery: dimmed lights and dramatic entrances. Saturday is the start of the breakaway National Front congress in Marignane, near Marseilles, which will "depote" Jean-Marie Le Pen as leader of the most powerful far-right party in western Europe and "elect" Mr Mégret.

BY JOHN LICHFIELD
in Paris

a struggle between those who believe the party should continue as the vehicle for the ego of one man and those who believe it should more truly represent the interests of its members and voters and ... aspire to power."

Mr Mégret is an unlikely demagogue and an unlikely nationalist. His mother is Greek; his father was one of the first senior French officials in the European Commission. His wife is Russian Jewish.

Mr Le Pen does not see it that way, of course. He refers to the Congress as "Liliput", a reference to Mr Mégret's stature, as well (he hopes) as the rebels' true strength in "his" party and the French electorate.

Since the NF split in December, Mr Le Pen, 70, has lost none of his bombast but he has lost almost all his early battles with Mr Mégret. "Le Chef" has been deserted by a large proportion of the party's brains - its most effective and ambitious elected officials and local activists - and, more surprisingly, its muscle - its brutal, boiler-suited security service. Mr Le Pen retains the party HQ, the old guard and the somewhat chaotic youth movement. Mr Mégret, 49, claims, with some justification, "all the live forces. Everyone with any quality. Everyone who works hard." He has also won a critical legal battle, giving him the right to continue to use the party's name, which means two "National Fronts" will contest the European elections in June.

Mr Mégret, five feet and a bit, has a Napoleonic fetish about size. He refused to be photographed in his temporary office at the Ile de France regional council. "I don't want to be photographed in a cupboard," he said. Finally, a larger office was found, more fitting for the ambitions of someone who believes that he can be, some time in the new century, President of France.

"The crisis in the NF is not a crisis of ideology or a crisis of policy. There is no difference between myself and Le Pen on ideas or values," he said. "It's

He comes from the classical background of the French political insider: top Parisian Lycée, Ecole Polytechnique, the Gaullist RPR. But he jumped ship in 1985 to become the *de facto* number two of the classical party of the outsider, a party he has reconstructed *département by département* along more professional lines.

He did not abandon the French establishment, he insists; it abandoned him, by surrendering French sovereignty to Brussels; by allowing large-scale immigration.

"I can define my beliefs with a quotation from De Gaulle. 'France is a country of the white race, the Christian religion and Greco-Latin culture'. That does not mean that only white people or Christians should live here but it does mean that they should be the dominant culture."

"I believe that the human race is a race whose culture depends on living in communities and that the two most important communities ... are the family and the nation. I joined the National Front to defend these values when other parties abandoned them."

It is Mr Mégret's particular talent to manage to sound like a *Daily Telegraph* editorial.

And what of Mr Le Pen's claim that Mr Mégret and his followers are the true "racists" and "extremists"? "It is false. False. I am not a racist. I am a nationalist. I do not believe that one race is inherently superior to another. But I do believe in putting the French first in France," said Mr Mégret.

As for Mr Le Pen's provocatively racist remarks, he re-



Bruno Mégret is an unlikely demagogue and an unlikely nationalist. He believes he can be President some time in the new century

Alastair Miller

nounces them, but feels the need to add: "It is ... a fact that, if you examine the prison population of France, you will find that one third of the prisoners are foreigners, one third are immigrants of recent date, and one third are French."

the Arabs or Africans are more criminal than any other people. Only that if you have a large immigrant population, removed from their own cultures, they will be fragile economically and socially and more likely to commit crimes."

On this basis, Mr Mégret

favours draconian new policies to "send home" immigrants who misbehave (and their families). He even favours the removal of French citizenship from any immigrant who commits a crime within 10 years of naturalisation.

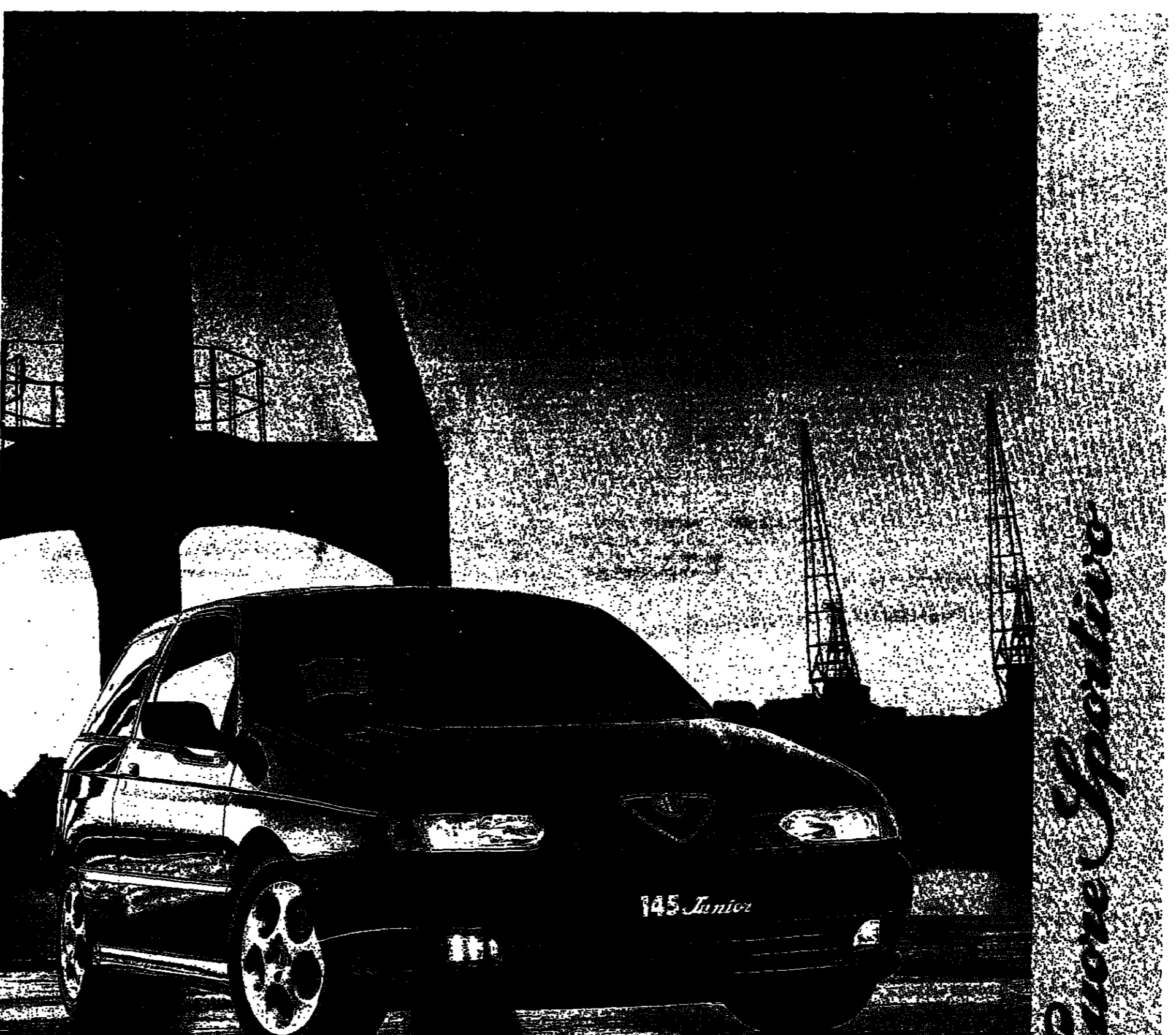
However, Mr Mégret's fig-

ures are false. The proportion of foreigners in French jails is 23 per cent and falling. Of these, only half come from the classic, African and North African groups. Many others are Europeans. There are no statistics to divide the 77 per cent "French" prison population.

There has been a tendency, both in France and abroad, to overestimate Jean-Marie Le Pen. He was ultimately trapped by his role as a malevolent political jester rather than a serious man of power. There has been a parallel tendency to underestimate Mr Mégret: even

Mr Le Pen made this mistake.

He does not have the charisma of Mr Le Pen: he does not have Le Pen's ability to unite all the tribes of the French far right. But he is capable of taking the extreme nationalist tendency into the next century with a modern, plausible image.



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World Society for the Protection of Animals

Internet: <http://www.alfaromeo.co.uk>

ALFA ROMEO



A Khmer Rouge soldier stands near the body of Pol Pot on the Thai-Cambodian border the day after he died

Pol Pot 'suicide' to avoid US trial

POL POT committed suicide last year after learning his Khmer Rouge rivals had offered to hand him over for trial on genocide charges, a Hong Kong magazine said.

But the US turned down the chance three weeks earlier to take the former Khmer Rouge leader into custody, because it had not prepared a legal basis on which to arrest and try him.

The former Cambodian leader, blamed for the deaths of 1 million of his countrymen, is said by the *Far Eastern Economic Review* to have taken an overdose of tranquillisers and anti-malarial pills at a Khmer Rouge stronghold on the Thai border. He died on 15 April 1998, aged 73.

His associates said he died of a heart attack but within days Thai intelligence sources said it was poison and that it "got into his body with his consent", according to a Reuters report

BY TERESA POOLE
in Peking

at the time. No autopsy was done before the body was cremated and until now no one had come up with a detailed scenario of the circumstances surrounding the death. Before the cremation the Thai army took samples of hair, skin and fingerprints.

Yesterday's *Far Eastern Economic Review* article was by Nate Thayer, who has consistently scooped the world on Khmer Rouge reports. According to what he says are impeccable sources, Ta Mok, the one-legged rival Khmer Rouge military commander who captured the ailing Pol Pot and his entourage in 1997, offered to hand him over to the US for trial just before his death.

Mr Thayer said that on 25 March 1998 "the Khmer Rouge made a decision and contacted

the Americans to turn him over but the Americans turned them down. They had no legal basis to arrest and detain him".

The *Review* said Washington scrambled to establish grounds for an arrest and to find a country where a trial could take place for the carnage during the Khmer Rouge's 1975-79 rule, but "Brother Number One" was dead before preparations were complete.

He had discovered Ta Mok's plan when listening to a Voice of America radio broadcast, and killed himself, said Mr Thayer. "Pol Pot died of a lethal dose of a combination of Valium and chloroquine."

In the days before the suicide US officials had been consulting Thailand and other countries about capturing him but did not itself plan such a move, according to reports at the time. However, Pol Pot presumably knew he was likely to

be captured or handed over to face genocide charges.

The question of an international tribunal to try former Khmer Rouge leaders is very much a live issue at the moment following the surrender last month of two Pol Pot henchmen, Khieu Samphan and Nuon Chea.

Since they gave themselves up they have been given a VIP tour of the Cambodian capital, Phnom Penh, and appeared at a press conference at which they said they were sorry for their roles in the deaths under the Khmer Rouge. "Let bygones be bygones," said Khieu Samphan.

The Cambodian Prime Minister, Hun Sen, at first hinted that a trial of the two men might not be in the interests of national reconciliation but recently said he supported legal action against the remaining Khmer Rouge leaders.

Euro fraud inquiry runs into trouble

THE FUTURE of Europe's new fraud investigation committee was thrown into doubt yesterday as senior MEPs rejected as "unsupportable" moves to allow the "great and good" to preside over the inquiry.

The European Parliament's second largest political group demanded that the "wise persons" should be made up exclusively of judges, official auditors or prosecuting magistrates with a track record in fraud investigation.

The committee of inquiry is the centrepiece of a compromise deal struck last week in Strasbourg after a clash between the Parliament and the European Commission over fraud allegations.

A dispute over its composition could delay the process of setting it up and derail its tight timetable, destabilising the fragile agreement.

The manoeuvring followed speculation about the composition of the committee, due to inquire into irregularities in programmes presided over by two European commissioners, Edith Cresson and Manuel Marin, and produce a preliminary report by 15 March.

Potential nominees being discussed among socialist MEPs and in the Commission include the former European commissioners Etienne Davignon and Peter Sutherland, and two figures involved in the preparation for monetary union: Nigel Wicks, the former chairman of the monetary committee, and Alexander Lamfalussy, who presided over the European Monetary Institute. Although confusion sur-

BY STEPHEN CASTLE
in Brussels

rounds the procedures for appointing the committee, Commission sources said they expect two members to be nominated by them, two by the Parliament, and a chair appointed by mutual agreement.

It emerged, however, that centre-right MEPs may demand the right for Parliament to appoint all the members - a move one political rival described as an attempt to "sabotage" the process.

James Provan, chief whip for the European People's Party, the Parliament's second largest grouping, said the idea of ex-commissioners sitting in judgement was "completely unsupportable". He added: "They must have nothing to do with the institution concerned. Whoever is appointed must be seen to be independent and fair-minded. This would include judges and members of the Court of Auditors."

James Elles, the party's representative on the Parliament's budget control committee, said: "You do not normally give the body you are inquiring into the right to nominate those doing the investigation."

"The membership will have to be approved by Parliament on 8 February. To then expect their report to be available in 11 languages by 15 March is laughable."

Other political groups in the Parliament, including the Greens and the Liberal Democrats, are on record as being highly critical of the investigation procedure.

Freetown left without food

EMERGENCY FOOD and medicines are unable to reach Sierra Leone's war-battered capital, Freetown, aid workers said yesterday. The shipments are held up by security fears and logistical problems.

An aid ship carrying 18,000 tons of rice from Italy was waiting off Freetown and could land the first significant food consignment since fighting engulfed the city two weeks ago.

"The captain says he wants guarantees of security before he will come to port," said a source at Ecomog, the Nigerian-led West African force defending the capital from the Revolutionary United Front.

Ecomog said on Tuesday it had cleared the rebels from the Kissy port area, and its officers said yesterday they were putting in place security for aid ships.

BY JEFF KOINANGE
in Freetown

But aid agencies in the regional centre in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, were more guarded. "Even if we have security, logistics will be a major problem," said a spokesman for the World Food Programme (WFP).

Foreign relief workers who fled two weeks ago have not yet returned. Local workers who stayed behind are trying to function without communications equipment confiscated by Ecomog, which accuses them of spying for the rebels.

Aid agencies have said that famine and disease could sweep through the city's population of about 1 million. The city has not even counted its dead from a battle that began with an RUF rebel assault on 6 January. (Reuters)

VIRGINIA IRONSIDE



Should a mother throw out her drop-out son who has turned into a drug dealer?

IN THE THURSDAY REVIEW PAGE 8



SMOKING CIGARETTES CAN

Marlboro King Size
12 mg Tar 0.9 mg Nicotine

Chief Medical Officer
Marlboro Warning
9 mg Tar 0.9 mg Nicotine

Legacy of the Raj: fine railways and lousy borders

FRONTLINE

CHAMAN, PAKISTANI-AFGHAN FRONTIER

THIS IS a border with no boundaries, boasting a frontier town with no frontier. Although the dusty fences at Chaman supposedly mark a division, with the low, wide desert plain around them officially split between Pakistan and Afghanistan, no one pretends that the border is where either country starts or ends.

From the Pakistani side, Chaman is approached from the city of Quetta - once, with its cool mountain climate and jasmine-scented air, one of the most prized postings of British India. The border is 80 miles away, but Afghanistan starts almost the moment one leaves the town. The ordered lines of the army barracks dissolve into sheep markets and bazaars, potholes start to appear in the previously smooth road and burgas - the hooded cloak that women traditionally wear while outdoors in Afghanistan - begin to multiply by the roadside.

The road winds through a contorted, sun-bleached landscape pitted and hummocked with dunes, bluffs and gullies.

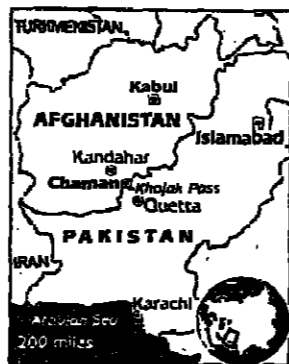
It runs straight over craggy plains where small villages keep their mud-walled houses grouped together for defence.

Then the road climbs the 8,000ft Khojak pass. Half-way up are the barracks of the 55th Pishin Scouts' Light Infantry Regiment, its officers' mess and stores. At the very crest of the pass, a surreal signpost points the way to "solitude hut".

Chaman itself sits in the middle of a plain in a perpetual shroud of sandstorms. The town may be just inside Pakistan but for hundreds of miles in every direction the people share a common ethnic stock, language, religion and culture.

They even share a landscape - there is little change in the dusty, rock-strewn desert until you reach the Arabian Sea to the south, the irrigated fields of the Indus hundreds of miles to the east or the mountains to the north.

The only border Chaman



marks is the boundary between two tribes - the Pathans and the Balochis. But the axis of that division lies at right angles to the frontier recognised on the map.

Even the home secretary in Quetta - the second-most senior civil servant in the province - admits the frontier, effectively created as the western boundary of British India, is a farce. "It is an imaginary border. You Britishers built us good railways but gave

us some lousy boundaries."

One such railway still runs from Quetta to Chaman. Almost all the passengers for the five-hour ride are taking the cheapest, if slowest, form of transport to or from Afghanistan. The locals completely ignore the border and are allowed to cross it with few checks. To most it is an irritation, little more.

To others, however, the border provides a livelihood. Astride his motorbike in the biggest of the town's bazaars Mohammed Ayub Achakzai - known as one of Chaman's biggest smugglers - laughs when asked how he makes his living. "I am just a trader and business is good. Big money, big money." He lays a fat index finger beside an acne-pitted nostril and winks.

With heavy tariffs imposed on goods entering from Afghanistan, smugglers can make huge profits bringing in everything from air-conditioning units to wood. The most profitable cargo smuggled through Chaman, however, is heroin.

JASON BURKE



Two Afghans on the border at Chaman. Locals see the border as little more than an irritant

Jason Burke

Chinese jail man for 'Net dissent'

BY TERESA POOLE
in Peking

CHINA JAILED a Shanghai computer entrepreneur yesterday for two years for supplying a US-based dissident magazine with 30,000 mainland e-mail addresses.

Lin Hai, 30, who acted for business, not political, motives, becomes the first known person punished by China in connection with dissent on the Internet.

China is cracking down in an attempt to increase supervision over how the Internet is used. The number of mainland Internet accounts has soared from 1.2 million in July to 2.1 million according to figures leaked from the Ministry of Information Industries, and Internet cafes have opened around the country. This week the authorities announced that anyone establishing an Internet cafe must first register with their local public security bureau, claiming that some cafes were being used for "gambling and pornography".

Mr Lin's sentence was lighter than expected for China, probably because he was not involved in dissident activities. But his case coincides with a clampdown on such protests, which has seen four activists sentenced in the past month to prison terms of between 10 and 13 years.

Mr Lin apparently passed the e-mail addresses to the pro-democracy "VIP Reference" online magazine in an attempt to help his computer company to develop business contacts. "VIP Reference" is regularly e-mailed to a claimed 250,000 mainland computer users, each time from a different e-mail address so that it cannot be blocked by the authorities. It includes pro-democracy articles by exiled dissidents and news suppressed in China. Court docu-



Mr Lin: Business motives rather than political aims

ments yesterday described it as a "hostile foreign organisation".

Mr Lin's court hearing took place on 4 December, but the authorities appeared uncertain about how harshly to punish someone who said he was just trying to make money. Yesterday's guilty verdict in Shanghai on charges of inciting subversion of state power was attended by Mr Lin's wife, Xu Hong, who emerged crying. It was the first time she had seen him since his arrest last March.

China's wish to manage the Internet runs far beyond what is technically possible. The US-based publishers of "VIP Reference", for instance, had no difficulty e-mailing most of the foreign media in Peking about the impending sentence, which it described as a "landmark case of Internet persecution".

Meanwhile, the wider dissident Internet runs far beyond what is technically possible. The US-based publishers of "VIP Reference", for instance, had no difficulty e-mailing most of the foreign media in Peking about the impending sentence, which it described as a "landmark case of Internet persecution".

Comment, Review, page 5

Hong Kong press boss in fraud row

A DISPUTE has broken out in Hong Kong after the conviction yesterday of three newspaper executives for conspiracy to defraud advertisers by inflating circulation figures for the Hong Kong Standard newspaper.

While the three managers were sent to jail, the newspaper's owner, Sally Aw Sian, was found not to have been part of the conspiracy, although the original charges cited her as a co-conspirator.

Miss Aw is closely associated with Tung Chee-hwa, Hong Kong's chief executive, who served as a director of her parent company. When her managers were arrested last

BY STEPHEN VINES
in Hong Kong

year, the justice department failed to explain why she was not charged.

Paul Harris, a leading pro-reform barrister, said it was "incredible" that Miss Aw had not known what was going on in her company. He said "there is a widespread suspicion this decision was taken because of the important position of Miss Aw in Hong Kong."

The managers created dummy companies to buy up 1.4 million copies of the newspaper and thus claim that its circulation had almost doubled.



NGOSSES CANCER

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High street gets its wake-up call

THE DISMAL December retail sales figures bear a message about the economy and a message about retailing itself. They confirm - as if confirmation were needed - that the economy is slowing. Consumers, the driving force behind two-thirds of GDP, have become a great deal more cautious.

However, the broader outlook is not as bleak as prospects for retailing itself. The monthly consumer confidence survey by GfK, the polling company, revealed a modest improvement in consumer confidence this month, and all along has shown people to be far more upbeat about their personal finances than about the economy as a whole. This is consistent with a gentle downturn like the one in the mid-Eighties rather than a severe one like the early Nineties.

Yesterday's figures showed a slowdown in the growth of sales by value to the weakest since 1987, when the current records began. It reflected both weak volumes and lack of pricing power. There is no doubt that it is the latter, the disappearance of traditionally healthy margins, that is causing most anguish to retailers.

The British high street has to face up to a future as a low-growth or even declining industry. Part of its prob-



OUTLOOK

lem here is the over-expansion of floor space, a cyclical phenomenon that will eventually be corrected. More seriously, traditional shopping is accounting for a shrinking share of our spending. As the average consumer grows wealthier, more and more of the pound in his or her pocket is being spent on leisure activities such as eating out, cinema-going and the gym, and on services, from haircuts to gardening.

On top of that, from out of the blue has come the threat from non-traditional forms of shopping for traditional goods. Now that so many people have bought PCs and modems, on-line shopping is likely to grow at an explosive rate. Perhaps

book-buying is the model: customers can still be persuaded out to a store. They don't all buy through Amazon.com yet. But they now expect the experience of a café - armchairs and amenable surroundings.

The strategies that have brought success to retailers in the past will work less well in these changing circumstances. The downturn will just hasten the pain. No wonder retailers have joined manufacturers as the most vociferous lobbyists for more interest-rate cuts.

Equity bubbles

ALAN GREENSPAN was at it again yesterday, albeit in more subdued form than last time. There were no references from the Federal Reserve chairman to "irrational exuberance", but there can be no mistaking the meaning of the following incantation, delivered in characteristically convoluted form: "The level of equity prices would appear to envision substantially greater growth of profits than has been experienced of late".

Is he right? Yes and no seems to be the answer. It tends to be forgotten in citing the continued re-

silience of stock markets to the world's growing economic travails that for most companies the bear market is already more than six months old with little sign of abating.

What is keeping the stock market buoyant, both in the US and in Britain, is a relatively small number of global mega stocks which, because they keep merging with one another just carry on getting bigger, progressively vacuuming up more and more of the world's supply of investment funds as they do so.

And even among the big companies, growth is confined to a quite small number of sectors. Generally speaking, the companies which are outperforming are in hi-tech, sunrise industries. Many of them don't yet make profits, but to distort Mr Greenspan's meaning, their stock prices envision greater profits growth than is presently experienced.

So there are two forces at work here. One is the "big is beautiful and even better if it is global" syndrome. The other is that of investing in our future, the new industries which might one day take over from the old. This type of investment has little to do with economic fundamentals or current corporate reality - it is all about hope. Some of this hope may

be reasonably well founded. But a lot of it isn't.

This week, British investors have been eagerly snapping up shares in any company which even hints that it might at some point make money from the boom in Internet traffic and electronic commerce. Shares in Zergo, a tiny company with a niche in Internet security software, have soared on the back of a series of strategic alliances with the likes of Intel and KPMG.

Even though these deals - which are little more than public declarations of friendship - have no direct impact on Zergo's tiny revenues, they have been enough to lift the company's market capitalisation over £200m.

Strangely, the market's treatment of Zergo looks sane compared to some of the other stocks that are enjoying an Internet-related boost. Excitable analysts were yesterday trying to talk up Great Universal Stores, probably one of the most conservative retailers in the country, as an e-business of the next century. Not that Lord Wolfson is showing any sign of getting online. It's just that, if he did, brokers reckon GUS could do quite well.

The argument is clearly illogical. Just like Dixons, GUS is not going

to be a major beneficiary of the electronic revolution. For both these companies, online retailing is much more likely to be a way of protecting existing revenue streams from potential rivals, rather than creating new value. But then those share prices have to be kept moving ahead somehow, haven't they?

Investor protection

HOWARD DAVIES, chairman of the Financial Services Authority, seems to be getting it in the neck from all directions at the moment. On the one hand he's criticised for creating an overbearing, unaccountable bureaucracy that if left unchecked, will smother the City goose under a mountain of regulatory red tape and drive its best practitioners off to the Bahamas, the Swiss valleys, or where ever. Now along comes the National Consumer Council to say that far from being too powerful, the FSA is not powerful enough.

As presently formulated, the Financial Services and Markets Bill makes "buyer beware" a core principle. The Bill includes a general consumer protection clause, but it also states that "consumers should take

responsibility for their own decisions". According to the NCC, this affords a far lower degree of consumer protection than is common for most non-financial products, which are generally guaranteed to meet a minimum set of standards.

Many of the NCC's suggested remedies are pure fantasy, and it seems utterly to have missed the point that there can be no guarantees when it comes to investing money. On the other hand, the NCC is right to point to the appalling lack of clear comparative information about different financial products, and to insist that in such circumstances, consumers cannot make informed choices that weed out poor ones.

It also correctly identifies the FSA's most glaring flaw - that it is meant to combine both wholesale and retail regulation.

It may be appropriate for wholesale customers to take responsibility for their own decisions, but the issue is much more debatable for retail investors. Still, if the FSA is thought both to be too tough on practitioners and too lax on investor protection, that may mean that in an imperfect world, Mr Davies and the Government are getting the balance about right.

Analysis: Britain has told Bonn that BNFL reprocessing contracts must be honoured or waste will be sent back

UK warns Germany in nuclear fuel row

BRITAIN TOLD Germany last night that it would not back down in the nuclear fuel reprocessing row, warning that if Bonn reneged on £1bn worth of contracts with BNFL, it would have to pay compensation and take back the spent fuel.

Stephen Byers, Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, told the German environment minister, Jürgen Trittgen, that the costs of Germany's decision to phase out overseas reprocessing of its nuclear fuel should not be borne by BNFL.

After the 30-minute meeting at the DTI headquarters, Mr Byers said the UK would not act as a "permanent storage depot" for nuclear waste and that the contracts with Germany would be decided under English law.

The German decision has cast doubt over the £1.85bn Thorp reprocessing facility at BNFL's Sellafield plant, which employs 7,000, along with hopes of privatising the company.

Thorp opened in 1994 and has

BY MICHAEL HARRISON

contracts to reprocess 11,300 tonnes of spent nuclear fuel up until 2014. So far about 1,700 tonnes have been reprocessed. It is one of only two such facilities, the other being Cogema's plant in north-west France.

Sellafield's reprocessing contracts with six German electricity companies account for about one-tenth of Thorp's £12bn order book. The deal with the Germans involves reprocessing just under 1,000 tonnes of waste. So far 650 tonnes have been delivered to Sellafield by boat and train. Of this, about 150 tonnes have been reprocessed.

Thorp accounts for just over a third of BNFL's £1.3bn turnover. Apart from Germany, it has long-term reprocessing contracts with British Energy and the Japanese. It also has a burgeoning nuclear clean-up and decommissioning business in the US worth around \$9bn. It also generates income from the



Above: trade secretary Stephen Byers (left) yesterday met Jürgen Trittgen, German environment minister, at the DTI in London. Right: German riot police clash with anti-nuclear activists near Dannenberg last year

sale of electricity from its Magnox nuclear stations.

So were the Germans to renege on their contracts, it would be serious but not necessarily disastrous for BNFL. For the Germans, the repercussions could be much more severe.

Sir John Guinness, chairman of BNFL, says: "These are very robust and enforceable contracts. We would have no hesitation in seeking enforcement or full compensation through the courts if any of these contracts were not honoured in full."

But the Germans' troubles would not end there, for they would have a much more political

explosive problem to handle. The contracts would oblige them to take back the 500 tonnes of spent fuel yet to be treated, along with all the plutonium and high-level waste from the fuel that has been processed. "These deals are sale or return," as one adviser to BNFL put it.

Once spent fuel has arrived at Thorp it is separated into plutonium and uranium. The waste is broken down into three categories - high, intermediate and low level. The low-level waste is sent to the nearby Drigg facility, encased in concrete and covered over. The intermediate waste is being stored at Sellafield in li-

quid form in giant lagoons inside the complex following the failure to gain planning approval for a deep repository on site.

But the high-level waste, containing 99 per cent of the radioactivity from the spent fuel, goes back to the customer. In the case of the Germans, they would be hard pressed to store 500 tonnes of spent fuel and have no facilities at all to store plutonium or high-level waste.

Werner Hlubek, board member German nuclear generator RWE, says introducing a ban on overseas reprocessing within a year is not feasible. "It will take at least five or six years before

the preconditions for a final change of policy can be created - that is, until the construction measures necessary to create decentralised interim storage facilities can be completed."

Added to this, the plutonium and highly-radioactive waste would have to be transported somehow across Germany -



which is sure to prove a flash-point. There have already been several violent confrontations between the German authorities and anti-nuclear protesters over shipments of spent fuel.

Environmental groups here, such as Friends of the Earth, believe Germany's decision to end overseas fuel reprocessing is a nail in the coffin for Thorp.

Dr Dominick Jenkins, FoE's nuclear campaigner, argues that Thorp has already become an expensive white elephant. None of the reprocessed plutonium or uranium has yet been supplied

back to customers, while the failure to get permission for an intermediate waste repository at Sellafield wrecks what economic argument there was for reprocessing in the first place. He predicts Sellafield will become simply a storage facility for spent fuel, if the world's nuclear industry bothers to send it at all.

But BNFL says it has enough existing storage capacity for intermediate waste to last a very long time. It is also confident of getting final approval for its new £300m Mixed Oxide Fuel (MOX) plant, which could produce operating profits of £200m.

A wider question is what impact the German row will have on the Government's hopes of privatising BNFL, which could bring in up to £3bn. City sources say the attitude in the Government and the Treasury towards a sell-off remains positive.

But FoE's Dr Jenkins maintains the City would drop BNFL "like a red-hot radioactive brick" because of its huge nuclear liabilities. BNFL has put aside £10bn that it says will be enough to meet 75 per cent of future liabilities. But a report by Sussex University's Science Policy Research Unit puts BNFL's total liabilities at £21bn to £38.6bn.

Notice to NatWest Cardholders

NatWest announces the following reduced variable interest rates

Credit Cards

effective from (and including) 1 February 1999

	Monthly Rate	APR (Purchase)	APR (Advance)
MasterCard #	1.527%	19.9%*	21.7%
Visa #	1.527%	19.9%*	21.7%
Combined Card Account # (MasterCard and/or Visa)	1.527%	19.9%*	21.7%
Advantage Banking Combined Card Account (MasterCard and Visa)	1.527%	19.9%*	21.7%
Student credit card (MasterCard or Visa)	1.527%	19.9%*	21.7%
Visa Primary	1.742%	24.5%**	26.4%

* Based on a credit limit of £1,000 and no annual card fee.
** Based on a credit limit of £500 and an annual card fee of £5.
† If an annual card fee of £12 is payable, APR is 21.4% for Purchases and 23.2% for Advances.

Condition 8 of the Cardholders Conditions of Use is amended to reflect these new rates with effect from (and including) 1 February 1999.

NatWest

Credit is only available to persons who are over the age of majority and is subject to status and conditions. Written quotations are available on request from National Westminster Bank Plc, 41 Lombury, London EC2P 2BP or from any branch.

Labour Euro head blasts ECB secrecy

THE HEAD of the European Parliamentary Labour Party yesterday launched a stinging attack on the structure of the European Central Bank, urging it to publish its minutes and improve communications with the general public.

Alan Donnelly MEP, who as a senior member of the Economic and Monetary Affairs sub-committee grills the ECB president on policy decisions, says: "With the best will in the world, I do not believe the way the ECB is established is sustainable."

Mr Donnelly, a pro-European, is tipped to be the next chairman of the influential sub-committee. He said he was concerned by the "trend of secrecy" at the bank. "I do think we will see a rather different ECB, still independent of the politicians, by 2010."

Speaking at the launch of a major European study by the accountancy firm PricewaterhouseCoopers, Mr Donnelly criticised Wim Duisenberg, the ECB president, for being "too macho". "It would be very helpful if Mr Duisenberg realised he didn't have anything to prove."

Like many City economists, Mr Donnelly argued that the ECB should follow the example

set by the US Fed and the Bank of England and publish the minutes of its meetings. He also said Mr Duisenberg should curb the influence of national central bank governors on European interest-rate policy.

His comments came as economists at PwC warned that an overly tight European interest-rate policy could fatally damage manufacturers in the euro zone. PwC said: "With the ECB continuing to take a relatively tough line, the euro might rise sharply against the dollar and the yen, further squeezing

European companies. As a result, growth (in the euro zone) might fall to little more than 1 per cent in 1999 and even lower in 2000 as the downward spiral of confidence and spending undermines domestic growth."

Manufacturers in Germany and Italy already face "near-recessionary conditions", PwC warned. If too-tight interest-rate policy and global developments combine to produce a hard landing, this could tip off major European economies - such as Germany - into decline.

On balance, felt Rosemary Radcliffe, PwC chief economist, Europe should avoid a hard landing, but this depended on other factors, including no spillover of problems in Brazil to other regions and continued strong growth in the US.

Miss Radcliffe said business confidence even in vulnerable economies - Germany and Italy - was still substantially above that in the UK. PwC said there was substantial scope for more cuts in UK rates.

Also speaking at the PwC launch, Jacques Lafitte, a key economic advisor to Commissioner Yves-Thibault de Silguy, said he was confident that the ECB would react appropriately to the challenges ahead.

Duisenberg: 'Too macho', says Alan Donnelly MEP

Midland Private Banking

Interest rates for Midland Private Banking customers

With effect from 21 January 1999

	Previous Gross %	Gross %	AER %
Private Banking Current Account (1)			
Up to £2,000	0.50	0.50	0.50
£2,000+	1.00	1.00	1.00
£10,000+	2.48	2.73	2.25
£50,000+	3.21	2.96	3.00
Private Banking Savings Account (1) (monthly interest option)			
Up to £10,000	5.13	4.89	5.00
£10,000+	5.32	5.09	5.20
£50,000+	5.42	5.18	5.30
£100,000+	5.70	5.47	5.60
Private Banking Savings Account (1) (annual interest option)			
Up to £10,000	5.25	5.00	5.00
£10,000+	5.45	5.20	5.20
£50,000+	5.55	5.30	5.30
£100,000+	5.85	5.60	5.60
Investment Management			
Cash held on the Capital Account within our Investment Management Service will earn interest at the following rates:			
	Previous Gross %	Gross %	AER %
Up to £5,000	1.00	1.00	1.00
£5,000+	5.15	4.91	5.00
£10,000+	5.35	5.11	5.20
£50,000+	5.44	5.20	5.30
£100,000+	5.73	5.49	5.60

Gross: the rate before the deduction of tax applied to interest on savings. AER (Annual Equivalent Rate): A notional rate which illustrates what the gross rate would be if interest was paid and compounded each year. All rates are quoted per annum.

(1) This product is no longer available to new customers.

Midland Private Banking is a trading name of Midland Bank Trust Company Limited, a subsidiary of Midland Bank plc. This interest rate notice is issued by Midland Bank plc, PO Box 757, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire, HP2 4SS.

Member HSBC Group

High returns from hi-tech investments

ANY SHARE with the most remote Internet connection is in danger of hitting the stock market heights.

The Internet vogue, with assorted computer and telecom associations, was one of the major driving forces in the market's latest advance which, for once, embraced shares outside the exclusive Fintech index. With US software giant Microsoft producing second quarter figures, the hi-tech brigade did not have to look far for inspiration.

Pison, the hand-held computer group, was a front-runner in the hi-tech stakes, soaring 118.5p to 845p. The growing possibility of a General Electric Co. bid was another influence. Another was indications that other groups had joined its Symbian joint venture aimed at promoting palm top computer operations. But Pison, surprisingly, was reluctant to name any of the latest recruits.

Many obscure AIM stocks joined in the party. Intelligent Environment led what often seemed a mindless romp.

Shares of Bickerton, the building contracting and property development group, firmed to 35p after lifting half year profits from £44,000 to £102,000. For the year around £300,000. "In sight but it is next to nothing that the AIM-traded group should start to perform with hopes running high profits will comfortably top £1.5m. The shares came to market two years ago and have been as high as 45.5p.

surging 38.5p to 68p. Netsell, which said it knew of no reason for its share surge "other than perhaps intense current market speculation concerning valuations to be attached to Internet-related shares", jumped 35p to 85p.

Others were chased. Internet Technology raced ahead 42p to 141.5p and IS Solutions surged 62.5p to 287.5p. The list also included Recognition Systems, up 4p to 16p, and PhoneLink, 7.5p to 39.5p.

Even the stockbroker Durlacher, renowned for its small company hi-tech and Internet links, joined in the fun with a 115p jump to 585p. In-Line, which has become the mystery Internet share, was again seeking the stratosphere. It jumped a further 101p to 273.5p. The yearly shareholders' meeting came and went without any official word to the market. The company is a tiddler - even now its capitalisation is only £9m. The shares started last week at 16.5p. Since then, directors have sold stock to - it is said - try to improve market liquidity. The company's portfolio includes Iron Wolves, said to be a submarine simulator and Dink, described as a "free multi-player puzzle game". Zergo, on its accountancy links, gained another 65p to 767.5p.

Top performing blue chip was the information group

MARKET REPORT



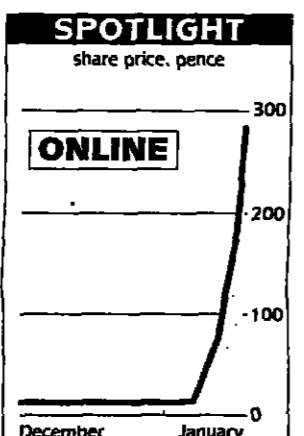
DEREK PAIN

Reuters which, the market assumed, must have Internet connections. The shares rose 88p to a 868p peak. Profits, due to be released next month, are expected to be down - Merrill Lynch is shooting for £570.5m against £531m.

Others caught on the world wide web included such telecom faithfuls as Colt Telecom, 77.5p higher at 1,325p peak and Telewest Communications, 13.25p at 263p. Mays added 25p to 755p and Sage 80p to 1,845p.

Great Universal Stores, 49p higher at 728p, was chased on its vague Internet links and Dixons, which became an Internet player before Christmas, rose 40p to 1,059.5p, a peak; the shares were 472.5p in July.

The uninhibited rush to climb aboard the latest hi-tech bandwagon is reminiscent of the heady early days of the bio-tech boom when untried and untested groups roared



SPOTLIGHT share price, pence

ONLINE

December January

ahead, losing touch with reality. Today, many of the bio fledglings drift along unwanted and unloved.

Footsie ended 78 points higher at 6,105.5 and even the supporting indices made headway. Renewed hopes of lower interest rates helped sentiment.

An array of trading statements had a mixed impact, with John David Sports rising 12p to 82p but Thorntons, the chocolate chain, melting 17.5p to 196p.

Moss Brothers, the clothing chain, held at 134p although it forecast a profits fall, and All-days, the convenience stores chain, crashed 85p to 92.5p. Colefax & Fowler, the furnishing group, gained 5p to 71p and Grampian, the retailing and transport group, 9.5p to 55p. Cranwick, the food group, improved 22.5p to 316p after suggesting year's profits will be £5.5m against £5m. But First Leisure Corporation lost 22p to 192.5p following a disappointing trading performance.

British Aerospace struggled out of its nose dive, re-

covering 24.5p to 450p. But General Electric Co., the other half of the Marconi deal, continued to fall, losing another 21p to 525.5p.

Marks & Spencer, following criticism of its spring fashion range, gave up 9.75p to 337.5p and Cadbury Schweppes lost 34p to 920.5p on worries about its soft drinks sales and the failure of its arch-rival, Nestlé, to meet growth expectations.

Zeneca rose 66p (after 107p) to 2,834p. Rumours continue to swirl that its merger with the Swedish Astra drugs group will be challenged. Latest to assume the market's mantle as counter bidder is SmithKline Beecham, supporting the story by falling 11.5p to 880.5p in busy trading.

Shell, the oil giant, managed a 3.75p rise to 339p on stories from Paris it planned an alliance with Elf Aquitaine. House of Fraser, the department stores chain, had another eventful session. The shares rose a further 4.5p (after 7p) to 92.5p in busy trading with Joe Bloggs creator Shami Ahmed said to

CONROY DIAMONDS & Gold held at 59.5p on the fringe Oxf share market. The Irish explorer, created by Professor Richard Conroy, could be on the verge of establishing a significant gold mine in County Monaghan. Mr Conroy says there are indications the company may have "discovered the first major gold mine in the British Isles". He admits, however, there is "an awful lot of work to do". CD&G is capitalised at £5.7m.

have built a near 5 per cent shareholding. Field, the packaging group, actually collected a bid. The US group Chesapeake Corporation is offering 320p a share and Field rose 23p to 316.5p.

A threatened miners' strike left National Power under pressure. The shares fell 20.5p to 510.5p as workers at hard-pressed RJTB Mining voted on strike action. RJTB fell 3.5p to 52.5p. The mining group and NP are in talks to put in place guaranteed order for eight pits in Yorkshire, where 4,700 miners work.

British Airways dropped 14p to 375p. Chief executive Bob Ayling briefed analysts, prompting CSFB to cut its share price target to 330p. A Westminster decision to refer the £75m take-over of CityFlyer Express to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission also hit sentiment.

British Steel, following investment meetings, rose 14.5p to 119p. CSFB put a target of 145p on the shares, down to 87.5p last month.

Blue Circle Industries was again hit by profit downgradings, falling 14p to 257p. Aegis, on bid hopes, improved 8.25p to 113.5p in busy trading. And Adam & Harvey jumped 25p to 142.5p.

SEAQ VOLUME: 1.3 billion
SEAQ TRADES: 83,515
GILTS INDEX: 116.39 +0.26

Lonrho Africa shares shrug off £5.7m loss

BY FRANCESCO GUERRERA

LONRHO AFRICA, the troubled hotels-to-cotton conglomerate, yesterday posted a disastrous set of results and pledged to sell a range of underperforming businesses.

The group, demerged from the late Tiny Rowland's mining empire in May, said it had been hit by a mix of tough market conditions, devaluations of African currencies and political trouble on the continent.

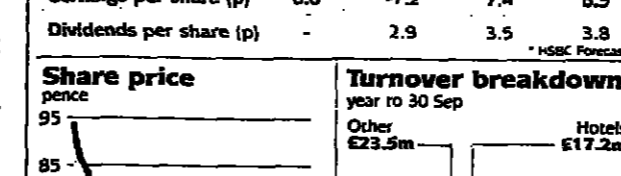
These plunged the company into a £5.7m pre-tax loss for 1998 compared with a £23.6m profit in 1997. However the shares, which have fallen from their 95p float price, shrugged off the figures and rose 3.25p to 50p.

Bernard Asher, Lonrho Africa's outgoing chairman, said the company's plight had been compounded by a revolt by a group of shareholders backed by financier George Soros. Blakeney Management and African Lakes, two emerging market funds with a 10.1 stake in the group, sought to replace half the board in a bid to break up the company. They were defeated by a narrow margin at a shareholder meeting last month.

Mr Asher said the costs of the rebellion "had been

LONRHO AFRICA: AT A GLANCE

Market value: £110m, share price 50p (+3.25p)
Trading record 1997 1998 1999* 2000*
Turnover (£m) 557.6 410.6 439.5 483.0
Profit for the year (£m) 20.6 -15.9 20.8 30.4
Earnings per share (p) 6.6 -7.2 7.4 8.9
Dividends per share (p) - 2.9 3.5 3.8



Share price
95
85
75
65
55
45
M J J A S O N D J
Source: Bloomberg

Turnover breakdown year to 30 Sep
Other £23.5m
Distribution £77.7m
Hotels £17.2m
Motors £194.0m

incidentally high. This company was completely disrupted for months and on top of this we have the monetary costs to advisers", to be revealed in this year's accounts.

On financial performance, chief executive Mark Newman said all Lonrho Africa's businesses, ranging from Toyota dealers in Uganda to pig breeding in Kenya, had been savaged by the plunge in the continent's currencies. Some currencies,

such as Zimbabwe's, had fallen by over 60 per cent against the pound, wiping some £36m from Lonrho's £425m turnover.

A collapse in cotton prices depressed the company's core agriculture operations, while the bombing of the US embassy in Nairobi destroyed tourism. Mr Newman said.

The chief executive said the company would try to improve performance by selling non-core and poorly-performing

businesses. In the long term the company would focus on just two divisions - agribusiness, which includes cotton, timber and food processing, and distribution, including car dealerships and wholesale food.

Mr Asher said business conditions were no better so far this year, although it was unlikely 1999 would see a repeat of "cataclysmic events" such as the Nairobi bomb.

Analysts cautioned that Lonrho's core markets would remain tough for most of 1999. "We are likely to see a poor set of figures in the first half of 1999 followed perhaps by a bit of a pick-up in motors in the second half," said John Meyer at SG Securities.

Commentators noted that Lonrho Africa's shares are trading at a huge discount to its net assets of 106p, making the company a takeover target. "There are a lot of emerging markets funds which would be interested," one said.

Jenni Chamberlain, African equity analyst at HSBC, said the shares should be bought "because of the chance of somebody taking them over, but also because of the break-up value". She said Mr Newman's disposal strategy would improve the company's performance.

Adscene looks for takeover chances

BY PETER TRAL LARSEN

ADSCENE, the regional publisher, is looking for acquisitions to bolster its publishing business after pulling out of commercial printing.

Robert Broadley, the finance director, said the company was looking to use its balance sheet strength to invest in its existing businesses as well as outside the group.

Last month Adscene, which publishes a range of local paid-for and free weekly newspapers in London and the Midlands, sold its Flair Press subsidiary for £1.3m. The move largely ends the company's exposure to volatile commercial printing.

The sale, which triggered an exceptional accounting charge of £5.4m, pulled Adscene into the red for the first half of its financial year. In the half to 28 November the company reported a pre-tax loss of £3m, after a profit of £2.9m in the same period the previous year.

However, Mr Broadley pointed out that the sale had reduced Adscene's balance sheet gearing to 28 per cent, giving it scope for expansion. "It takes some of the pressure off the organic growth," he said.

Despite the rapid consolidation in regional newspapers, now dominated by a few large groups, Adscene insisted that it had an independent future.

David Fordham, the chief executive, said its operating margins, which widened to 19 per cent, are at least as good as those of its larger rivals.

Nevertheless, analysts pointed to signs of a slowdown in advertising sales. Advertising revenues rose by 3 per cent, driven by increased recruitment advertising. But motor and other forms of classified advertising showed falls.

"Recruitment advertising will decline as unemployment increases," Mr Fordham said. "But we still hope to report growth in advertising in the second half."

Adscene shares, which have risen sharply in recent weeks from last year's low of 110p, fell 2p to 163.5p. Analysts said the shares now trade on a multiple of 11 times historical earnings, reflecting the concerns that profits would be undermined if advertising began to fall.

Tough year in store for Alldays

BY ANDREW VERITY

SHARES IN Alldays, the convenience store chain, lost half their value yesterday when the group shocked the City with disappointing results and warned of a difficult year ahead.

Shares in the group fell from 177.5p to 92.5p, wiping £73m from the market value, now £77m. Last summer the shares reached a peak of 621.5p.

The plunge was caused by pre-tax profits down from £21.1m in 1997 to £13.6m before exceptional gains. Analysts expected flat profits of at least £21m.

Colin Glass, chief executive, said the group had expanded too quickly. He said he was self-critical about internal controls that had not been good enough.

Alldays, formerly known as Watson & Phillips, has grown rapidly, adding 200 stores last year to bring the total to 958. The

group was hit by poor weather. Convenience stores rely on high-margin products such as soft drinks and ice cream. Industry observers believe the poor 1998 summer was the least profitable on record.

The group changed its name to Alldays last year and disposed of W&P's food service business, nearly halving its stock market value. David Saunders, head of the retail business, left last year and Mr Glass took hands-on control.

Alldays yesterday announced a major restructuring that will depress profits in the year ahead. Regional franchises that do not perform will be bought in to reduce overheads. The group has appointed Stuart Lawson, a former director of Burger King, as finance director.

Dresdner Kleinwort Benson, broker to Alldays, predicts flat profits in the year ahead, with dividends staying at 12p, down from 18.8p a year ago. David Stoddart of Henderson Crosthwaite said the shares were unlikely to attract much interest in the near future.

London Contemporary Art Fair, which kicked off its tenth annual exhibition this week.

"We started in 1989 with 32 art galleries exhibiting and 4,000 visitors. We sold £200,000 worth of art," Mr Morris recalls. "Now we have 90 galleries, get 40,000 visitors and we expect to sell around £10m worth of work."

Mr Morris adds that taking into account art works sold after the exhibition closes, "we think the value of our art market is £15m to £20m".

Despite the success of the Design Centre as an exhibition venue, Mr Morris insists he has "no plans to float the business - even though lots of City people keep approaching me".

Mr Morris believes in keeping it in the family - his four

Sir Malcolm to take the strain

BY JOHN WILLCOCK

GEOFFREY ROBINSON may have resigned as paymaster-general, but one of his protégés, Sir Malcolm Bates, continues to enjoy political patronage - from John Prescott of all people.

Mr Robinson was an ally of Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, but was not a friend to Mr Prescott. Now Mr Prescott has appointed Sir Malcolm as non-executive chairman of London Transport.

Sir Malcolm, chairman of both Pearl Group and Premier Farnell, was called in by Mr Robinson within weeks of the New Labour general election victory to carry out a complete review of the stalled Private Finance Initiative (PFI).

Alastair Ross Goobey was removed from the PFI Panel to make room for Mr Bates, and returned to his post as chief executive of Hermes Pensions Management.

Now Mr Prescott has called

PEOPLE AND BUSINESS

BY JOHN WILLCOCK

in Sir Malcolm to breathe new life into the capital's staggering public transport network. The Deputy Prime Minister yesterday praised Mr Bates' "extensive management experience and involvement in the development of public-private partnerships (which) means he can help LT build an effective partnership with the private sector."

Heartening to see New Labour healing its rifts.

By design

ANDREW MORRIS is a happy man. He is the managing director of the Business Design Centre in Islington, which is owned by his family business. He is also the founder of the



brothers are also in business, while 13 grandchildren are waiting in the wings.

Youngest brother Jack is chairman of the Design Centre, while Gerald, Paul and Philip run CIL International, a shop-fitting company that recently "fitted out the duty free complexes at Hong Kong and Dubai airports."

Top watchdog

JOHN MAGILL, the mild-mannered accountant from Deloitte & Touche who became Dame Shirley Porter's nemesis in the Westminster Council "homes for votes" scandal, has been appointed a top national audit watchdog.

Mr Magill now heads the Forensic Services Department at Deloitte & Touche, and is joining the Financial Reporting Review Panel. The 16-strong panel has power to investigate annual accounts of any public or large private company.

Mr Magill was formerly district auditor of Westminster City Council and was appointed by the Audit Commission to

investigate the sale of the Council's cemeteries for a depository store. He then investigated the sale of council houses involving council leader Dame Shirley and Tory colleagues.

Mr Magill has won the grudging respect of his contemporaries at Deloitte & Touche by his ability to work non-stop on the plane both on the way to New York and then on the return flight to Heathrow. Not a man to cross.

Back to SJPC

PAUL BRADSHAW, a well-known figure in the fund management business, is returning to St James's Place Capital (SJPC), which he helped found along with Sir Mark Weinberg and Jacob Rothschild in 1991.

Mr Bradshaw is coming back as chief executive of J Rothschild International Assurance.

If you have any news you wish to share with "People and Business", please e-mail: willcock@independent.co.uk.

FOREIGN EXCHANGE RATES									
Country	Sterling	Spot	1 month	3 month	Dollar	Spot	1 month	3 month	Euro
UK	1.0000				0.6073	0.6073	0.6084	0.7026	
Australia	2.3741	2.3722	2.3701	2.3680	1.5634	1.5634	1.5637	1.5638	
Canada	1.5770	1.5753	1.5731	1.5710	1.1886	1.1886	1.1881	1.1881	
Denmark	1.1702	1.1702	1.1702	1.1702	34.848	34.848	34.848	34.848	
France	2.5065	2.5046	2.5024	2.5003	1.5223	1.5224	1.5225	1.5225	
Germany	10.590	10.587	10.584	10.581	6.4191	6.4191	6.4191	6.4191	
Italy	1.2534	1.2518	1.2501	1.2484	1.1586	1.1586	1.1586	1.1586	
Japan	8.4567	8.4558	8.4549	8.4540	1.1278	1.1278	1.1278	1.1278	
Netherlands	6.380	6.377	6.374	6.371	1.6863	1.6863	1.6863	1.6863	
Spain	2.7818	2.7799	2.7780	2.7761	1.6868	1.6868	1.6868	1.6868	
Sweden	4.5865	4.5846	4.5827	4.5808	2.7855	2.7855	2.7855	2.7855	
Switzerland	12.735	12.732	12.729	12.726	2.8008	2.8008	2.8008	2.8008	
US	1.5770	1.5753	1.5731	1.5710	1.1886	1.1886	1.1881	1.1881	
Other									
Australia	1.5770	1.5753	1.5731	1.5710	1.1886	1.1886	1.1881	1.1881	
Canada	1.5770	1.5753	1.5731	1.5710	1.1886	1.1886	1.1881	1.1881	
Denmark	1.1702	1.1702	1.1702	1.1702	34.848	34.848	34.848	34.848	
France	2.5065	2.5046	2.5024	2.5003	1.5223	1.5224	1.5225	1.5225	
Germany	10.590	10.587	10.584	10.581	6.4191	6.4191	6.4191	6.4191	
Italy	1.2534	1.2518	1.2501	1.2484	1.1586	1.1586	1.1586	1.1586	
Japan	8.4567	8.4558	8.4549	8.4540	1.1278	1.1278	1.1278	1.1278	
Netherlands	6.380	6.377	6.374	6.371	1.6863	1.6863	1.6863	1.6863	
Spain	2.7818	2.7799	2.7780	2.7761	1.6868	1.6868	1.6868	1.6868	
Sweden	4.5865	4.5846	4.5827	4.5808	2.7855	2.7855	2.7855	2.7855	
Switzerland	12.735	12.732	12.729	12.726	2.8008	2.8008	2.8008	2.8008	
US	1.5770	1.5753	1.5731	1.5710	1.1886	1.1886	1.1881	1.1881	

INTEREST RATES			
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SPORT

Cricket: The Sri Lankan off-spinner with the unorthodox style is being spurned by sceptical observers Down Under

Australia throws Murali off course

BY STEPHEN BRENKLEY
in Melbourne

MUTTHIA MURALITHARAN is one of the world's great bowlers. At present he is being hounded around Australia. Where he should be lauded he is being ridiculed; when he should be hailed he is being spurned. Murali is a prince being treated as a scoundrel.

Quite simply, the Australians think the bewildering Sri Lankan off-spinner is a chucker. They have no firm evidence to support this contention and, actually, they have quite the opposite. Yet they have reached a conclusion, demanded a conviction and want to extract punishment.

They will not accept that an action which does not conform to the norm is legal. They said so three years ago through a series of umpiring calls and are saying so now. If, thus far, more insidiously, it is distinctly unsavoury and it is seriously disrupting the Sri Lankan team and casting a large shadow over a one-day tournament in which England are competing tigerishly.

The media have made their point in all manner of ways, abstruse and explicit. The crowds at the Carlton & United triangular series have followed their lead. Each time Murali has come on to bowl he has been greeted with chants of "No ball." Officialdom has stepped in and stepped out again just as quickly, appearing initially to say that the bowler's action had been reported and then categorically stating that it had not.

It is an open secret that Murali

'It's frustrating when people are shouting at you all the time - but, the more they shout, the more I'll be tougher'

may be called by an umpire before this competition is done. That profession appears to have closed ranks but nods and winks have been distributed like gifts to International Olympic Committee delegates. No call came, except from the terraces, in Sri Lanka's first three matches. It may have arrived in the day-night match in Hobart against Australia but the hottest tip in town is that if it is going to happen it will happen this weekend in Adelaide. What ructions there would be.

Muralitharan is playing under tremendous pressure, intolerable scrutiny and probably has no plans to join his hundreds of thousands of compatriots who have made their homes in Australia. Last summer, when he took 16 wickets against England in a Test at The Oval in an entrancing piece of bowling as you could ever wish or are likely to see, he was on top of the world. Five months on, he must feel he is in the gutter.

The team have tried to ensure he said nothing but, dignified though that was, he eventually broke his silence before some waiting television cameras. "It's frustrating when you go to the ground and people are shouting at you all the time, that's maybe the most annoying thing than anything else," he said. "But I think the more they shout, the more I'll be tougher. Other bowlers or other batsmen, when they hit a four or take a wicket, the crowd appreciate them. But with me it's the other way round." The only problem, he added, was in Australia.

The relationship between the bowler and the country has, as they say, form. Murali was 23 when he first came to Australia in 1985, at the start of his remarkable international career. Word quickly got around about the youngster with the



The debate over Muttiah Muralitharan's bowling action is complicated by his 'corkscrew wrists' and his physical inability since birth to straighten his arm



Allsport

'A CHUCKER' IN THE RULES OF CRICKET

Law 24 (1)
Note A. Definition of a throw.

'A ball shall be deemed to have been thrown if, in the opinion of either umpire, the process of straightening the bowling arm, whether it be partial or complete, takes place during that part of the delivery swing which directly precedes the ball leaving the hand. This definition shall not deprive a bowler from the use of the wrist in the delivery swing.'

but there is a suspicion that the whole affair is being propelled by something other than the intricacies (beautiful or criminal, depending on your view) of Murali's action. Not racism, exactly, but stemming from the strained cricketing links between the countries.

The gossip grew so confused at

the start of the tournament that Peter van der Merwe, the former captain of South Africa who is the referee, was forced to deny that he had received reports about the action. In a statement the International Cricket Council said that, in any case, public comment by an umpire or referee is not consistent with

the confidential nature of its procedures.

The gist of much of the statement is that while umpires can, of course, invoke law 24.2 if they think fit, there is now another method to pin down dodgy actions. If an umpire or referee sees something not to his liking, the referee can request the home board in a series to "instruct the TV network to discreetly obtain footage of the player from different angles using a mixture of normal speed and slow motion cameras." The resultant video is then dispatched to the nine members of the ICC's advisory panel on illegal deliveries, who have a video conference. If, in their opinion, there is reason for doubt, the player's home board is informed and asked to withdraw him from international cricket for remedial action.

The ICC also revealed that as recently as 1997 the panel had examined Murali's action and found it to be

fair. The panel has not, however, looked at footage of him bowling when Hair called him in the 1995 Melbourne Test and the ICC was also at pains to point out that what applied in 1997 may not apply now. "The panel can only decide on what has happened, not on what may happen," it said in a sentence as convoluted as Muralitharan's delivery.

It also transpires that an Australian scientific institute has scrutinised film of the bowler and declared the action legal: he creates an optical illusion.

Ranjit Fernando, the Sri Lanka manager, conceded that the bar-raising had affected the team's morale and that they had gone through a trauma, because of being subjected to what amounted to harassment.

"We firmly believe Murali's action has always been fair," he said. But, in Australia, Murali is in danger of being sentenced without trial.

The disturbing truth behind Tyson's fading aura

AFTER SCANNING the many thousands of words that were tapped out last week about Mike Tyson and watching his performance against Francois Botha on television, two conclusions have been reached personally about the former undisputed heavyweight champion.

The first - and it allows for the disturbing effects of ghoulish media attention - is that Tyson has become a bore. The other, not by any means an original or ringing announcement, is that he will not be remembered as a truly great fighter.

Television's two dimensional restriction could not conceal from this viewer the technical shortcomings evident in Tyson before he



KEN JONES

delivered the short, stunning right that brought a fifth-round knock-out over Botha in Las Vegas last Saturday.

Long-range consultations with a number of good judges who were close to the action added to the

impression that Tyson would now probably be at risk against any well-schooled, resolute opponent.

In truth, Tyson is finished, only a ghost of the fighter who once spread terror throughout the heavyweight division, lessons imparted by his mentor Cus D'Amato long since forgotten.

When Tyson was launched on a career that became quickly spectacular, every version of the championship his at barely 22 years old, he was clearly a programmed fighter, his natural power refined by D'Amato's tuition, responding to numbered combinations called out from his corner. D'Amato's death, a

rancorous split with trainer Kevin Rooney, and Don King's seductions left Tyson without critical ring guidance. A three-year prison sentence for the rape of a beauty queen heightened fascination with Tyson, making him even more marketable, but it put paid to him as a fighter.

Suggestions that he could emulate Muhammad Ali's remarkable resurrection after a long absence from the ring were hogwash. Apart from anything else, and size comes into it, Tyson did not have Ali's talent for extemporisation.

Realising that his leg speed, exceptional in a heavyweight, had gone, Ali first explored the extent of his will and then devised a method of smothering that was taken a daring stage further when he drew George Foreman's fire in Zaire before knocking him out to sensationally regain the title.

The latent intellectualism attributed to Tyson has not shown itself in the ring. An aura of invincibility disappeared with the loss of his title to James 'Buster' Douglas. Unlike Ali, who was unique, he has been unable to compensate for the effects of inactivity.

I found it interesting last week to read that Tyson's latest trainer, Tommy Brooks, was sure of a response to his instruction.

Assuming it meant that Tyson would again be employing a stiff jab, that he would be a more elusive target when coming forward and throw clusters rather than single punches, I looked for signs of improvement.

There, in the first round, they disappeared once Tyson grew frus-

trated in his efforts to weaken Botha.

It reminded me of a conversation I had with Floyd Patterson when he was preparing Donovan 'Razor' Ruddock to fight Lennox Lewis in an eliminator for the heavyweight title. After putting in a great deal of work Patterson was sure that Ruddock would enter the ring as a much improved fighter. Instead, at the first crisis, he reverted to type and did not last long against Lewis.

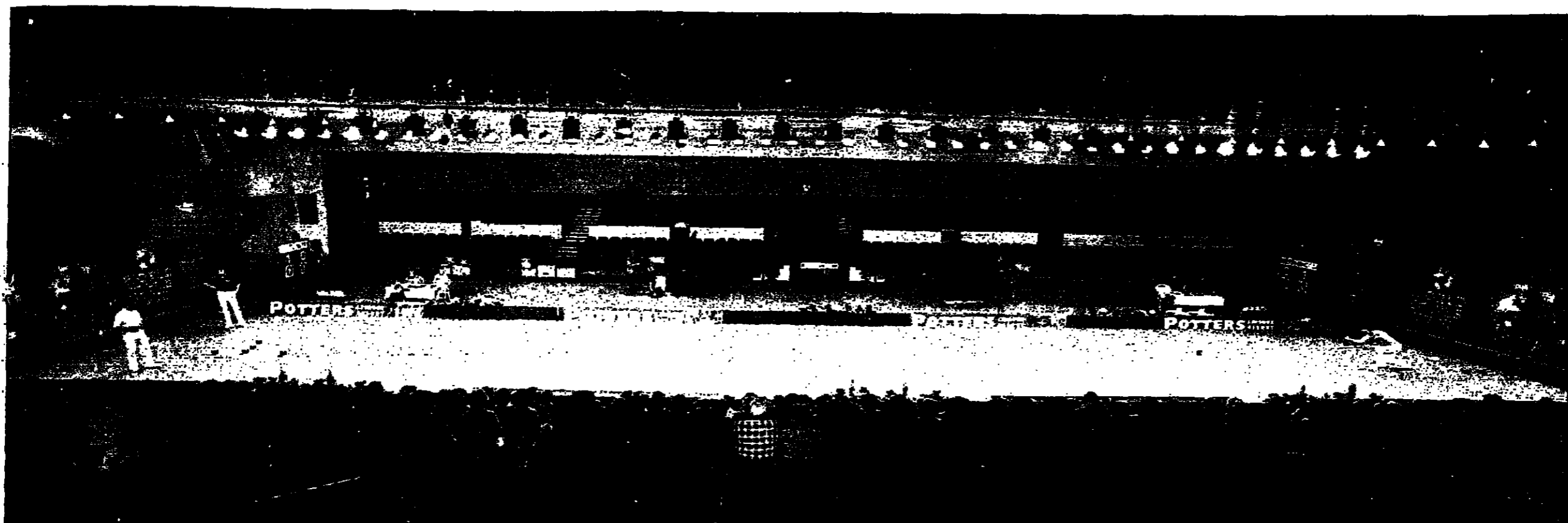
This was more, or less, the way things went last week in Las Vegas. Forgetting most of what Brooks had told him, Tyson concentrated on trying to dispose of Botha, who was not up to much anyway, with a single punch.

News came yesterday of a

bizarre incident two days before the contest involving Tyson and a group of broadcasters who were waiting to interview him. "Call me nigger, call me nigger," he shouted at them. He then became tearful. "It was very odd, disturbing," I was told. "You couldn't be sure what Tyson would do next so we decided to tape the interview rather than go live with it."

Stories like that make people wonder what the future holds for Tyson, whether his violent mood swings will have a tragic outcome. Significantly, I think, there was no eagerness on the part of Tyson's television sponsors, Showtime, to talk up his effort against Botha. The implication in their silence is that they can see it will soon be over for him.

Bowls: Britain's oldest holiday camp has placed its faith in an unlikely attraction as it attempts to boost its image



How they see it: Spectators enjoy a panoramic view of the rink at Potters Leisure Centre while, below, competitors get down to action in front of a packed house at the World Indoor Championships

Tradition makes way for hi-de-hi life

DAVID LE MARQUAND did something rather daring at the World Indoor Bowls Championships this week. Are you ready? He used bowls which matched the colour of his shirt: yellow. Well, I mean to say...

Within the sport, according to Anne Dunwoodie of the World Bowls Tour, Le Marquand's little innovation is regarded as "futuristic". Evolution, rather than revolution, is the name of this particular game.

Imagine, then, the furore when the game's authorities decided to shift the World Championships from their home of the last 10 years at Preston's Guild Hall to the venue they currently occupy - Potters Leisure Resort, Coast Road, Hopton-on-Sea.

"People wrote to us to say it was like moving football from Wembley or snooker from the Crucible," said John Potter, whose family runs the centre on the Norfolk coast. "Even those who supported us said what we were trying to do was impossible."

Like it or not, the traditionalists are going to have to get used to it. Having invested several millions in building the world's largest indoor bowls arena, the Potters have laid out a further £1.3m to host and sponsor the Championships for the next four years.

In return, they hope to establish a new clientele of paying - and staying - specta-

BY MIKE ROWBOTTOM

tors to enliven their slack mid-winter months. More than 20 hours of mid-afternoon exposure on BBC2 will do nothing to harm their ambitions.

The decision to seek the grey pound associated with bowling was a calculated risk by a company founded on a stroke of fortune by John's great grandfather, Herbert, who established the enterprise with £500 he received for winning a national newspaper competition. The now defunct *Sunday Chronicle* judged that the young solicitor's clerk had responded best to their challenge

'It's very easy to be led here. You get a lot of people wanting to buy you a drink. If you get drunk as a skunk... you won't play very well'

of coining an apt three-word phrase starting with letters in "resemblance". Herbert's masterstroke of wit - "Seldom Mutually Agreed" - provided Britain with its first holiday camp, 16 years before Billy Butlin got in on the act.

Thus, as the millennium approaches, the participants and spectators of the 21st World Indoor Championships find themselves contained within a cosy, warm, carpeted dome.

The setting - indoor fountains, pot plants, chandeliers

restaurant, bars, gym, swimming pool - is deliberately intended to give visitors the sense of being on a cruise.

For bowls followers such as Sylvia Carter, staying throughout the entire three weeks of competition at a cost of around £1,200, the whole concept is working wonderfully. As she prepared to watch her favourite bowler, Ian Schruback, in action - "I first saw him at the 1986 Commonwealth Games and I thought: 'Oh, isn't he gorgeous!'" - Sylvia reflected upon how it felt to be The Complete Package, to use the new alias bestowed upon her by Radio Norfolk.

"I'm having a marvellous time," she said. "I have seen something of every match. I'm here alone, but I haven't been alone. Everybody has been mixing in together - the players, the officials and bobs like me. There's always someone to talk to." For some of the players, however, constant contact with the paying public can sometimes have its downside.

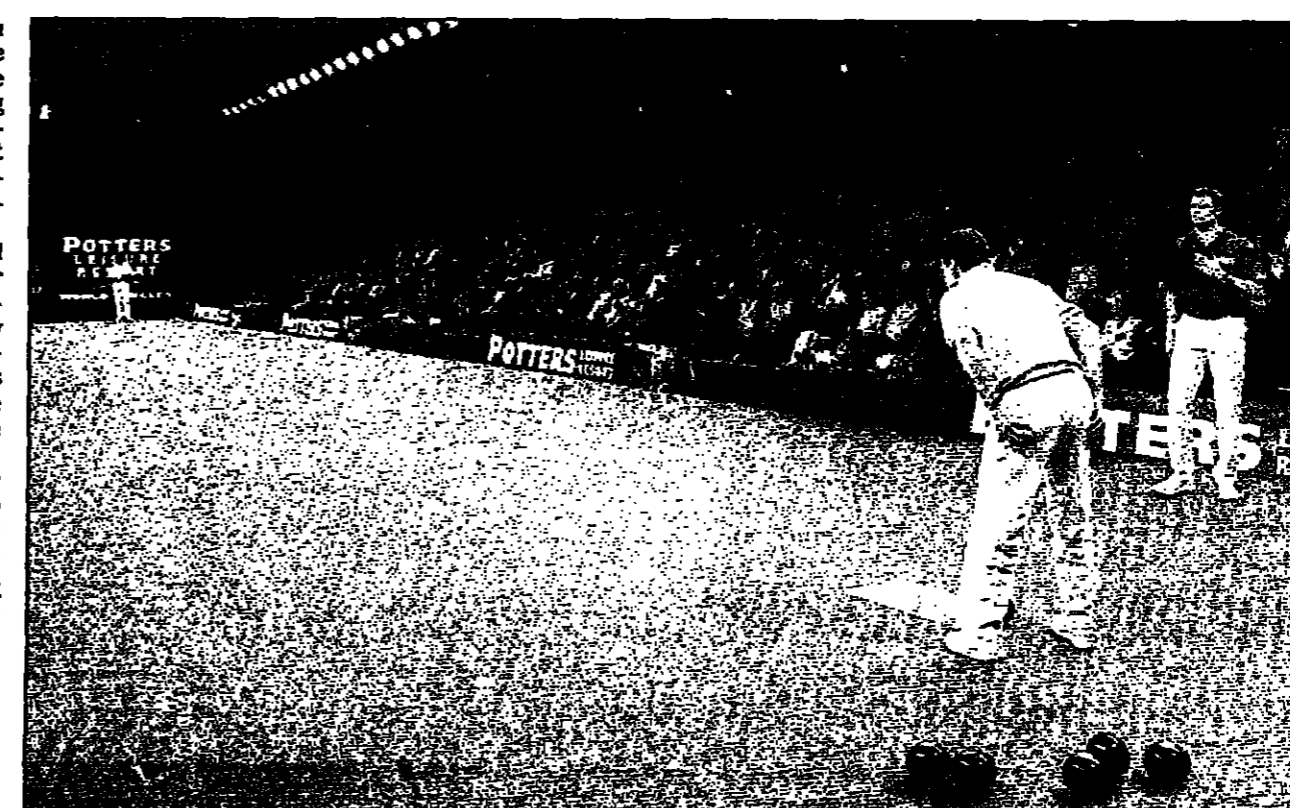
"The facilities are excellent," Les Gillett, one of the 16 seeded players this year, said. "The only minus is you can't get

privacy. If you have just lost, you want to get away to consolidate your thoughts. Here people keep coming up and saying 'hard luck' or asking for autographs. They mean well, but it has bothered a few of the players. You can't really go anywhere."

Should any of the tormented competitors make a dash for freedom across the surrounding windswept fields, you fancy they would be bounced back inside by one of the huge balloons that used to thwart the escape bids of Patrick McGeehan in the TV series "The Prisoner".

The holiday atmosphere may also have contributed to the discomfiture of the No 2 seed, Hugh Duff, whose unexpected defeat in his first match followed an evening of jollity in the bar which had concluded in the early hours. Some reports referred to the 35-year-old Scot as the nearest thing bowls has to a wild man. By all accounts, that is not very near at all - Alex Higgins he most certainly is not.

The sport's biggest problem, says the World Bowls Tour's chief executive Gordon Dunwoodie, is that it is seen as being a sport for old people. While the spectators at this year's championship - averaging 400 per session, which is up on Preston's figures - uphold that perception, Dunwoodie points out that most of the top players are now in their 20s and 30s.



This is true. But if they are anything like Gillett, youngest of the seeds at 28, these players have such wise old heads on their shoulders that it is easy to see why the genial Duff stands out as an *enfant terrible*. Gillett, who broke through to the top level after winning the 1997 Bupa Open title as a qualifier, believes it is

up to individual bowlers to discipline themselves.

"It's very easy to be led here," Gillett said. "You've got a lot of people wanting to buy you a drink. But they serve soft drinks here as well as hard ones. If you get drunk as a skunk when you are due to play the next day, you won't play very well. At this standard,

you just can't get away with it."

Gillett's restrained preparations - single pints and plenty of practice on the same portable rink that was used in last year's Championships at Preston - appear to be paying off for him. While half the numbered seeds have made an early exit, he managed to win his opening match against the

Australian player, Steve Glas-

son. Meanwhile, Sylvia, who has had an unrivalled opportunity to study the form at first hand, has sorted out her own unofficial rankings for the competition, which ends this Sunday. "I have a feeling for David Gourlay," she said, with a smile. Results, Digest, page 29

Promise of fresh glory for Gregory

A spell of soul-searching in the sun has rejuvenated Super League coach after a bad year. By Dave Hadfield

AMID ALL the changes that have taken place at Salford as they prepare for what they believe will be a vastly better year than last, the most significant is that the glint is back in Andy Gregory's eye.

The club's coach, the longest-serving in Super League, despite the precariousness of his role, had a hunted, unhappy look about him during last year's rugby league season. "I couldn't wait for that season to end," he says. "Now I can't wait for this one to start."

The metamorphosis of Gregory has come just in time. His friends and admirers were worried sick about him last year as he went into a downward spiral that mirrored his team's troubles on the field.

"I was totally down and I didn't give 100 per cent commitment to the job, but this year I'm completely focused," he said. "It's been well publicised the problems I've had, but now I feel great."

The problems centred around the break-up of his marriage and a self-confessed descent into heavy drinking, not helped by taking over a pub at the precise time when he was most vulnerable.

"I think a lot of it was down to my divorce, which was totally

my own doing. What changed my life around was two directors of the club who took me on holiday. We talked about my problems with drink and they managed to convince me that I'd had a great career and I'd still got a great life. When I came back, I was a different person."

If that sounds like a bit of a lavish advert for Gran Canaria, then his appearance and demeanour bear out the claims of a transformation.

For the first time since his playing days as the finest British scrum-half of his generation, he is working out regularly with his players and looks fit and alert once more.

He is not claiming that he does not have the odd pint - and he opened a new pub, appropriately next door to the complex that will house his old club Wigan's new ground last night - but the demons are under control.

And, as the pain has lifted from his shoulders, the mood at the whole club has changed. "It's the best atmosphere since I came here," he says. "Including the season when we finished sixth in Super League."

Last season was a dreadful disappointment after that benchmark, with Salford drop-



Andy Gregory, Salford's coach: 'What changed my life was two directors who took me on holiday' Peter Jay

ping to 11th place, and an air of disillusionment and crisis hanging over The Willows.

There were few weeks when it did not look as though Gregory might either quit or be sacked, but the Salford chairman, John Wilkinson, stuck by him and gave him the breathing space to sort himself out - something that Gregory will never forget.

"Most of the supporters stuck with me as well, although there were a few who were having a go. They seemed to forget what we had achieved here."

Gregory believes now that he persisted too long with

some of the players who had done a good job for him. Wilkinson has now backed his judgement by allowing a major re-structuring over the close season. Even during a winter notable for its transfer activity, few clubs have brought in 11 new players and much of Gregory's peace of mind will inevitably depend on how well they gel.

"There are no excuses now," he says. "We've got a great squad together with competition in all positions, so now it's up to the coaches."

Among the changes are a complete clear-out of the over-

seas quota and the recruitment of five new Australians, who will add, between them, some of the elements that were missing last season, like ball-skill in the forwards and pace out wide.

"People who were critical last season also lost sight of the fact that we didn't have a proper gym or training facilities. We were like nomads up and down the East Lancs Road."

That is something else that has been put right for 1999 and it is obvious just by looking at Gregory that he has derived as much benefit from it as anyone.

"I wasn't happy last year; I did

what I had to do, but I wasn't enjoying it. Now I'm buzzing and I'm delighted about the way the squad has been training. We came off the pitch today and just said to ourselves 'That'll do us'."

He knows as well as anybody that the most optimistic of pre-season sentiments can evaporate with an early series of defeats, but whatever it cost to take Andy Gregory soul-searching in the Canaries already looks like money well spent.

"We will be successful this year," he promises. As far as re-discovering his own direction is concerned, the success has begun.

Salford show faith to end Hayes' hiatus

JOEY HAYES has ended two years of injury-induced misery by finally signing for Salford. The Great Britain tour winger in 1996 suffered a series of setbacks at St Helens after returning from New Zealand, but he has now passed a medical to allow him to complete his move to The Willows.

"It's been a frustrating couple of years and this transfer seems to have been going on forever, but [Salford coach] Andy Gregory has shown a lot of faith in me," he said yesterday.

Hayes, now 23, suffered a series of knee injuries that at one stage threatened his career. He has been given a clean bill of health on that front and has now been given the all-clear as well on the wrist that he fractured at the end of last season.

It will, however, be two weeks before he can play and will thus miss this weekend's friendlies against Barrow and Lancashire Lynx. Hayes becomes Gregory's 11th signing of the winter, and probably his last.

Another Salford newcomer, the Australian forward Hudson Smith, will be able to play against Barrow tomorrow - after seeming likely to miss out because of the size of his feet.

Smith, who wears size 14 boots, lost them in transit from Sydney, but an appeal has produced a volunteer willing to lend him a pair while the former Balmain second-rower has had a pair of his own made.

Another player from Sydney, the former Cronulla forward, Danny Lee, has

BY DAVE HADFIELD

confirmed that he will arrive to join the Super League newcomers, Gateshead Thunder, next month now that his wife has given birth.

All Gateshead's players, except Lee and the former Newcastle Knights centre, Brett Grogan, whose partner is awaiting immigration clearance, will be used in the Thunder's first friendly at Castleford on 29 January.

All Super League and First Division players are to be consulted over some of the game's most significant issues. The Rugby League, in conjunction with the Professional Players' Association, is to ask for their opinion on matters such as the organisation of international football and the effectiveness or otherwise of the League's drugs policy.

Players are also to be asked for their views on the system of unlimited interchange used in Australia. The game in Britain allows unrestricted use of substitutes, but some coaches are strongly in favour of it.

Alex Murphy, who received an OBE in the New Year's honours list, is to be given a special presentation before St Helens' match against Swinton on Sunday. The former Great Britain scrum-half first played for Saints and later coached his home-town club.

The former Oldham coach, Brian Gartland, who discovered the current Great Britain coach, Andy Goodway, as a 17-year-old, has died, aged 62.

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 2. Grasley 8-1
 3. Silver Bay A Margaraevens fav
 4. C. J. 8-1
 5. Alton 8-1
 6. Alton 8-1 Another Course, 1/2 Sprint
 7. (10th), 10-1 Captain Weather (4th), 10-1
 8. 1 Camera Boy (8th), 25-1 Days of Throne
 9. 33-1 Little Rowley.
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THE INDEPENDENT
Thursday 21 January 1999

Corretja falls to Norwegian journeyman

CHRISTIAN RUUD sprang the biggest surprise of his so far unremarkable career to knock out Alex Corretja in the Australian Open yesterday, costing the men's tournament another of its biggest names.

Ruud, without a tournament title in seven years as a professional, disposed of the world No 33-6, 6-3, 6-4, 6-4 on a windy outside court at Melbourne Park. The third seed, Pat Rafter, the biggest name left in the men's draw, hit form, however, to remain on course for a replay of the US Open final against his compatriot, Mark Philippoussis, in the fourth round.

Rafter rushed to a 6-2, 6-4, 6-4 win over Mark Woodforde, another Australian, while the big-serving Philippoussis earlier saw off the American Michael Chang, the 14th seed

TENNIS

BY PAUL TAIT
in Melbourne

beating the 1989 French Open champion 7-6, 2-6, 6-3, 5-7, 7-5. The loss of Corretja in the second round means the tournament is without the top three men in the game, after Pete Sampras's decision to miss the season-opening Grand Slam and the late withdrawal of world No 2 Marcelo Rios with a back injury.

"I don't have to be disappointed because I played really well in the last couple of months," Corretja said. "It's just a pity it happened here because it's a Grand Slam."

The Spaniard, the French Open runner-up, never looked comfortable against the ag-

gressive Norwegian, who was happy to rely on his whippy forehand and play from well behind the baseline to take advantage of a swirling wind.

Corretja's loss was another blow for Spain, which now sends an armada of players to Melbourne each year but saw 10 of its best players sink without trace on Tuesday. "It was terrible," Corretja said. Ruud, 26, is better known on the less-er Challenger circuit and has a string of Grand Slam first and second round exits next to his name stretching back to 1992.

Rafter, the 1995 champion Andre Agassi and Tim Henman are the main contenders left in what is being referred to as the "most open" Open in years.

Agassi faces a clear run to the semi-finals, but Rafter has the toughest road ahead and must survive against the in-form Swede Thomas Enqvist in the next round before he can face Philippoussis. Then he would have a likely quarter-final against Henman.

In the women's singles, the world No 1 Lindsay Davenport crushed Argentina's Florencia Labat 6-2, 6-1 without quite hitting her best form. The seeds Jana Novotna, Conchita Martinez, Dominique van Rooz and Natasha Zvereva also advanced.

The fifth seed, Venus Williams, was in similarly aggressive form, reeling off 11 games in a row to crush Sweden's Asa Carlsson 6-2, 6-1.

The Swiss eighth seed, Patty Schnyder, was the highest-ranked woman to be knocked out when she lost 6-7, 6-4, 6-3 to the Frenchwoman Amelie Mauresmo.

Results, Digest, page 29



Mark Philippoussis stretches for the ball during his five-set victory over Michael Chang at the Australian Open in Melbourne yesterday. AP

Wayward Smith loses her great opportunity

BRITAIN'S INTEREST in the women's singles ended at the Australian Open yesterday when Samantha Smith lost her second-round match to the Australian Nicole Pratt 6-4, 6-4—after leading 4-2 in the opening set.

Smith beat Pratt 6-3, 6-1 at the US Open two years ago and made another fine start. But she then lost four games in a row to be set down and lost her serve again at 4-4 in the second.

After saving two match points the 27-year-old Essex player volleyed over the baseline with the whole court at her mercy and Pratt, ranked 102nd against Smith's 64th, won when yet another forehand flew out.

"I'm really disappointed," she said. "I never thought I was going to lose, but I missed so many open court shots."

There was more disappointment for British fans in a record crowd when the doubles pair Neil Broad and Andrew Richardson lost in straight sets in the first round to France's Olivier Delaite and Fabrice Santoro. The seventh seeds won 6-7, 6-3, 6-3.

In the women's doubles Britain's Julie Pullin teamed up with the Czech Republic's Eva Melicharovna, but they had the misfortune to meet Martina Hingis and Anna Kournikova. Predictably, they lost 6-3, 6-0 to the No 3 seeds.

Officials deny Courier's drug claims

BY JULIAN LINDEN

The point we are trying to make here is the sport itself is not rotten. It's not as if we have suddenly uncovered a whole cache of opioids. It's not like cycling or football. We've been testing now for 10 years and I can only remember six or seven positive cases out of more than 1,000 each year."

The women's world No 1, Lindsay Davenport, also weighed into the controversy, admitting she was suspicious of the "superhuman" efforts of some players on the men's tour, and saying that at the Australian Open yesterday.

Jim Courier, the president of the International Tennis Federation, has denied claims by Jim Courier that the sport faces a major drugs problem. The defending Australian Open champion, Petr Korda, is at the centre of a drugs controversy, having tested positive to the steroid nandrolone at Wimbledon last year. Courier said he suspects some players are using banned substances such as erythropoietin, or EPO.

"I cannot accept the fact that tennis has been killed or damaged by cheating and drugs because it's very isolated," Tobin said at the Australian Open yesterday.

been trying to prevent, confessing to not knowing the difference between a number of different performance-enhancing substances, then offering opinions about them. "I don't know the difference between blood doping and steroids," she said. "I'm still trying to learn about it."

Mark Miles, the chief executive officer of the men's ATP Tour, said Courier's claims were both inaccurate and damaging to the sport's image. "I've read and heard a lot this week—not just from Jim—that, in my view, was not helpful, not accurate, not a fair characterisation of the sport or the (anti-doping) programme and based on misunderstanding, lack of information or disregard for the facts," Miles said.

"We are not going to muzzle players and say: 'Don't make any comment...'. Personally, I think it is inappropriate for players to cast a cloud over the reputation of their sport without any substantiation."

Under ITF regulations Korda should have been suspended for a year, but escaped with a fine after an independent appeals committee in December upheld the player's claim that exceptional circumstances were involved.

The ITF has subsequently appealed to the Court of Arbitration for Sport in Lausanne over the leniency of Korda's penalty, but the player's lawyers last week went to the High Court in London to challenge the ITF's right to appeal.

The saga has upset some of the sport's leading players, who have blamed the ITF and ATP for allowing Korda to continue playing and giving the wrong message about drug-taking.

A former world No 1, John McEnroe, said: "I don't think that is the type of example that we need to start. Frankly, they have to crack down."

LINGFIELD

HYPERION
1.00 Sammy's Shuffle 1.30 Star Turn 2.00 Mister Raider 2.30 Grassland 3.00 Admirals Place 3.30 Tipton 4.00 DOUBLE FLIGHT (nap)

GOING: Standard.
STALLS: 51 & 1m—outside, remainder—in.
DRAW ADVANTAGE: Low best up to 1m, especially of races.
1st Half: 1m—outside, remainder—in.
2nd Half: 1m—outside, remainder—in.
3rd Half: 1m—outside, remainder—in.
4th Half: 1m—outside, remainder—in.
5th Half: 1m—outside, remainder—in.
6th Half: 1m—outside, remainder—in.
7th Half: 1m—outside, remainder—in.
8th Half: 1m—outside, remainder—in.
9th Half: 1m—outside, remainder—in.
10th Half: 1m—outside, remainder—in.

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CHARITY RACEDAYS AT LINGFIELD HANDICAP (E) £2,500 added 3YO 5f

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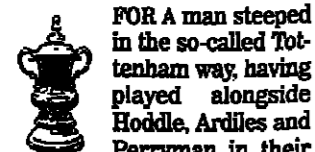
3.00-10 LANTANA (12) (C) M. Moore 4.9.10... D. Sweeney 1.9

4.00-10 LANTANA (12) (C) M. Moore 4.9.10... D. Sweeney 1.9

FA Cup focus: A former Tottenham man can improve career prospects by plotting Arsenal's demise

Lee winning the mind game

BY PHIL SHAW



FOR A man steeped in the so-called Tottenham way, having played alongside Hoddle, Ardiles and Perryman in their pomp, Colin Lee carries a dark secret. Long before he sported White Hart Lane's cockerel crest, he wore the cannon of their fiercest rivals.

On Sunday, Lee's Wolverhampton Wanderers side will try to break Arsenal's hold on the FA Cup in the fourth round at Molineux. As well as giving the First Division club a chance to avenge last year's semi-final defeat by the eventual Double winners, the tie has stirred memories for their manager of his previously undocumented "career" as a Gunner.

Now 42 and in charge of Wolves since the autumn departure of Mark McGhee, Lee was a 16-year-old centre-forward with Bristol City when Arsenal asked whether they could borrow him to play in a youth tournament in Madrid. Frank Stapleton had broken an arm, so Lee made the trip.

"I did all right," he recalls. "We got to the semis before losing after having two lads sent off by a diabolical referee. Before one game we watched bullfighting on television. Liam Brady was like a matador with the ball that night - no-one could get it off him. Glenn Hoddle was the best player I ever played with, without doubt, but Brady was close."

When Lee did arrive in north London, it was with Spurs. Amid the drama of his debut, when he scored four times in a 9-0 rout of Bristol Rovers, the Highbury connection was overlooked. "I kept it quiet," he laughs.

In a sense Lee has come full circle since his Spanish adventure. For he is again holding the fort, having been told that the position will be reviewed at the end of the season. This time, however, he is no mere understudy. Should he guide Wolves into the play-offs, let alone the Premiership, the job would surely be his for the taking.

The reluctance of the chairman-owner, Sir Jack Hayward, to commit himself more fully to Lee probably owes more to a determination not to be stuck with another lame duck than to any doubts about his ability. The former No 2 has made a reasonably persuasive start, his 13 games producing six wins and four draws.

His record certainly compares favourably with McGhee's last 13, only two of which were won, and with Lee's own unhappy introduction to management. After adding Chelsea and Brentford to his



Eyes on the prize: Colin Lee casts envious eyes around the trophy room at Molineux and hopes he can play a part in reviving the good old days

Peter Jay

playing portfolio, he was coaching with Watford in 1990 when he was thrust into the void left by Steve Harrison's sacking.

"It was a time of great upheaval at the club. I took over in March but Elton John sold up that summer and I ended up having to sell the best players. The next season started badly and the new owner wanted his own man in, so I was out by November. With hindsight, it came too early for me. I don't know how quickly Sir Jack thinks we can turn it round here. He hasn't told me we have to get up this season. I think he realises we had a mountain to climb. When Mark left we were in mid-table, so it was a difficult situation to pick up on."

Was he disappointed not to

be taken on permanently? "No, but I do think I'm under pressure. I've got so many games to get so many results, and try to earn the security of a contract. But all managers are temporary in a way."

"I don't know how quickly Sir Jack thinks we can turn it round here. I think he realises that we have a mountain to climb"

Lee characterises himself as "a thinker"; not for him the crockery-throwing histrionics of some managers. He listens to tapes of Bill Shankly and is fascinated by the process of subtle but constant evolution the great Scot instituted at Liverpool. Of those he served, the

most influential was John Neal at Chelsea, "a man of few words, but when he said something it carried real authority". Intriguingly, given the imminent arrival of Arsenal, George Graham is the con-

temporary Lee most admires, for his "disciplined approach and the way he motivates players". He detects similar attributes in John Gregory.

Wolves-watchers view Lee's switch from three at the back to a four as an attempt to impose his style on the team. He

insists the change was forced on him by injury, illness and outgoing transfers. "The squad today is arguably not as good as when Arsenal beat us (1-0) in the semi-final because we've had to let a lot of people go."

"We've lost Steve Froggatt, Dougie Freedman, Don Goodman, Robbie Slater and Steve Claridge since then, plus Steve Bull with a knee problem. But we've got great spirit and commitment. If Arsenal play as well as they can, they'll get through, no doubt about it, be-

cause they've got better players. But it could be one of those days when it doesn't quite happen for them. They might come here not expecting such a hard game, knowing they've beaten us recently. Then again, they got such a shock against Preston that I think that's unlikely."

Rather than go to Deepdale, Lee watched Wolves' reserves. He then passed up the chance to see Arsenal play Liverpool in order to assess Watford ahead of last weekend's game at Molineux. Promotion, it seems, holds a higher priority than giant-killing glory. "Definitely," he says. "The Cup will come and go. The League goes on until the end."

Wolves' prospects on both fronts have received a timely

boost with Lee's first major signing, Haavard Flo. The Norwegian striker has the aerial power to provide an ideal foil for the ground-level wiles of Robbie Keane, the Irish prodigy reputedly coveted by Arsène Wenger.

Before paying Werder Bremen £700,000 for Flo, Lee could be judged only on his organisational and tactical prowess. Perhaps now, with Sir Jack's purse strings loosened, he will feel less like a caretaker.

"I've been so focused on the team and the need to get results that it hasn't quite sunk in yet that I'm actually the manager of Wolves," he reflects. For Arsenal's erstwhile teenage temp, Sunday should bring it home with a vengeance.

Illustrated History of the FA Cup was reissued yesterday in an updated edition. He said: "To have dispensed with replays would have damaged the fabric of the competition."

The majority of clubs will also welcome the news. John Hollins, the manager of Swansea City who knocked West Ham out of this year's competition in a replay last week, said: "It's a fair decision. I think every team should get a chance to play at their own ground. It gives clubs the chance to experience a night like we had at the Vetch last week. With such a prestigious competition it should be too much to ask to find space for replays."

Compromise by Wilkinson

BY MARK BRADLEY

HOWARD WILKINSON has ruled out 28 first-choice players from his plans for the forthcoming world under-20 tournament in Nigeria to ward off expected opposition from clubs.

The Football Association's technical director held a meeting with the Premier League and the Football League last Friday before issuing a guarantee that any player involved regularly in first-team football would not be picked. So out of the list of 66 eligible players drawn up by Wilkinson, almost half had not been selected for the mid-season tournament in April.

The squad has not yet been announced but the likes of Michael Owen, Gareth Barry,

Alan Smith, Jonathan Woodgate, Jody Morris, Joe Cole and Wes Brown will now almost certainly not have to miss vital end-of-season domestic games.

Even though England will now be sending virtually a shadow 18-man squad, Wilkinson accepts that some managers may still object to the inclusion of certain players.

But the former Leeds manager, who outlined his exclusion criteria as being "players involved with a first-team squad on a week to week basis", said yesterday: "I have gone as far as I can and now we have to work through it. I have a reasonable

rapport with most managers. I think the solution is as ideal as it can be. It would have been an exercise in futility to start a war concerning the release of first-team players."

Wilkinson said he had already received backing for his policy from two Premiership managers, while another was actually in favour of one of his players going.

Wilkinson accepts the demands on players are difficult, but also believes that the success of Kieron Dyer in the last tournament, in Malaysia, proves that those who are not household names can benefit.

Although Nigeria is a volatile country with a history of human

rights abuses, there is no question of England unilaterally pulling out of a tournament which also involves the likes of Germany, the United States, Australia and Spain.

"Along with the other European countries and America, we have sought assurances from Fifa [the sport's world governing body] as to any concerns we have and if these are given then we will go," Wilkinson said.

England's standing in international football - and their chances of hosting the 2006 World Cup - would certainly be hurt if they unilaterally pulled out from what is seen by Wilkinson as the second most prestigious international competition.

FA Cup keeps replays

THE FOOTBALL Association yesterday repelled the latest assault on the integrity of FA Cup when it rejected a proposal to dispense with replays, writes Glenn Moore.

The suggestion followed next season's expansion of the Champions' League which could cause fixture congestion for clubs progressing in both competitions.

But the Challenge Cup committee decided the interests of less than a handful of teams should not be allowed to overrule those of the 550-plus who enter the 127-year-old trophy.

However, the anomaly created by this year's decision to complete the final on the day is

to be continued. The move was largely prompted by a possible fixture clash with the European Cup final even though it is a problem which could only occur if Manchester United reach the FA Cup final on May 22 and the European final on May 26.

An FA spokesman stressed that this decision was also due to the sense of anticlimax experienced by fans attending the final at not seeing a result. Critics argue that the retention of a final replay would benefit fans since more genuine supporters are able to attend such games.

The decision to retain replays for the rest of the competition was applauded by Bryon Butler, whose Official

TOMORROW



He followed in his father's footsteps by playing for Sheffield Wednesday and his own son is an Owls supporter, but Gary Megson is hoping the home side will be knocked out of the FA Cup at Hillsborough on Saturday. Stockport County's manager talks to Guy Hodgson

Negri wastes West Ham chance Pompey stave off bankruptcy

MARCONI NEGRI may have ended his chances of joining West Ham in a move from Rangers, writes Alan Nixon. The Italian striker had a poor game against Third Division Barnet in a specially arranged private match at the club's training ground yesterday morning.

Negri was starting for the first time this season after his troubles at Rangers, but the West Ham manager, Harry Redknapp, was unimpressed by his contribution. Negri was hardly in the game and his touch was rusty, to the dismay of manager and prospective team-mates.

Redknapp will now only consider taking Negri on loan as he does not want to pay the asking fee for him that Rangers want. The West Ham manager is still working on a deal for the Cameroon midfielder Marc-Vivien Foe and is trying to

arrange a fee with his French club, Lens. He is likely to be cheered that a move for Liverpool's right-back Rob Jones is also close, although Liverpool want more than the £200,000 they have been offered.

Rangers and Arsenal are also interested in Jones, but the Hammers are the only club to have spoken to him so far and offer lucrative terms.

Redknapp has ruled out making an offer for the England midfielder Robert Lee because he refuses to pay £2m for a 32-year-old. "Don't get me wrong, I am a big fan of Robert Lee," Redknapp said. "But Newcastle want money for Robert and he is 32, so it is not really on at £2m."

Newcastle United are remaining tight-lipped over reports that they have made a £4m bid to bring the 24-year-old Internazionale and Nigeria

midfielder Taribo West to St James' Park. The club's chairman, Freddy Shepherd, and their chief executive, Freddie Fletcher, were out of the country yesterday as speculation mounted over a move.

Newcastle's manager, Rudd Gullit, who had eight years as a player in Italy with Inter's neighbours, Milan, and Sampdoria before moving to Chelsea, still has good contacts in the country and was on the verge of completing a £5m deal to sign West's team-mate Ibrahim Ba before a medical revealed a problem. But the Dutchman has repeatedly maintained that his dealings on the transfer market will remain secret until the deal is done.

The Premier League has dismissed suggestions that top European leagues were pre-

venting the emergence of young domestic talent.

The Italian coach, Dino Zoff, urged Serie A clubs to stop the import of foreign players because it was stopping young Italian players coming through the ranks. But Premier League spokesman Mike Lee insisted that the English top flight has got the balance between foreign imports and young domestic talent right.

"You always want to attract the best and the transfer market now for top clubs is a global one they are operating in," Lee said. "Clubs always want to buy the best that is available but they must work hard to make sure the young players are very much a part of their future. Overall, we certainly think the balance in the Premier League is a fairly good one."

PORTSMOUTH MAY be struggling, but they live to fight another day after avoiding a winding-up order yesterday.

A construction firm which built a stand at the club's ground was paid a long-standing debt owed by Pompey's holding company Try Build, the specialist and maintenance division of Try Group PLC, received £430,000 at the Companies Court Division of the High Court, which finally ended the dispute that had been ongoing since May of last year. The 4,500 seat stand was finished by the Uxbridge-based firm in October 1997.

Richard Barraclough, the Try Group company secretary, revealed a settlement was

reached late on Tuesday night. As a result, Try Build withdrew its winding-up petition against Blue Star Garages, parent company of Portsmouth Football Club, which was the guarantor for the payment. The petition had originally been for £435,000.

The Football Association of Ireland yesterday announced plans to build a 45,000 capacity international stadium in south-west Dublin. It is estimated the stadium will cost £57,000 to build.

The stadium, which will be called The Arena, will have a removable, natural grass pitch and a retractable roof to accommodate sporting as well as cultural events, indoor and outdoor, according to the FAI.

Collymore frustrated at fringe status

BY TOMMY STANFORTH

STAN COLLYMORE, Aston Villa's record signing, has spelt out his disappointment at having only a "bit part" to play in manager John Gregory's current plans. The £7m signing from Liverpool is concerned that his "peripheral" role is wrecking his chances of resurrecting his England career.

Gregory said last week that Collymore was "winning me over" with his attitude and commitment despite being unable to dislodge the Dion Dublin-Julian Joachim striking partnership. But that is little consolation to Collymore, who believes he deserves a place in the starting line-up at what he feels is the peak time of his career.

Collymore enjoyed a rich vein of form in the pre-Christmas period but his sending-off against Liverpool and a subsequent injury have cost him his place in the starting line-up.

"I've scored twice in the last four games and even in the times when I've come on as a substitute I have made a difference," Collymore said. "Seven goals in nine full appearances would be enough to get into a lot of sides. I have looked at the statistics for the various partnerships and when I've played with Dion Dublin he has scored goals and, when I've played with Julian Joachim, so has he."

"It's down to the manager because he picks the team but it is very disappointing for me at the moment not to be getting into the side when I feel I'm playing well enough to warrant a place and to be influential. It's a case of having to deal with it. I've done nothing wrong and I can't see what more I am expected to do."

"The disappointing thing for me is that by being overlooked week in and week out means it is becoming more and more obvious that I am a peripheral figure - and I've never been that in my career. That is something, if the situation goes on, that I will have to look at. It is making me take a step back in the England reckoning."

"Glenn Hoddle was at the Everton game on Monday but it doesn't matter if I'm sitting on the bench."

Middlesbrough yesterday confirmed the career of their Italian striker Marco Branca is over. The former Internazionale player has made just one appearance as a substitute for the Teesside club this season after damaging a knee in April last year, and has been back in his own country battling for fitness since the summer. Boro admitted yesterday that he will not return to Premiership football.

John Hartson has vowed to return to his aggressive old ways in a bid to recapture his best form. The £7.5m striker is hoping that his move to Wimbledon to put his career back on track after a poor first half to this season.

Hartson believes a get-tough policy is the right way for him to re-establish himself as one of the best frontmen in the Premiership.

"Now I'm at Wimbledon, I want to get back to my best, putting myself about," the 23-year-old former West Ham striker said. "I think that in the past, when I was getting booked a lot and I was flying around, that was when I was playing at my best. When I haven't been putting myself about, I haven't been at my best because I'm not the same player. Aggression is a big part of my game and I'm not going to lose that."

Wales will, after all, have the chance to play Denmark in Cardiff. The last obstacle has been removed to Wales' desire to switch the European Championship match with the Danes on 9 June from Anfield to Ninian Park.

The Danish Football Association has confirmed that it is very unlikely to raise any objections to the change. Sjarne Hansen, the Danish FA's general secretary said: "If Wales want to play the match in Wales, there's not much we can do to stop them."

The FIFA Fair Play prize for 1998 has been awarded jointly to the national associations of Iran, the United States and Northern Ireland.

Sepp Blatter, the president of the world sport's governing body, said the joint-award was proof of football's role as a mediating force.

The FIFA Fair Play prize for France 98, jointly won by England and France, will also be presented at a gala evening in Barcelona on 1 February.

Collymore
frustrated
at fringe
status

BY TOMMY STANFORD

Collymore, who has been out of the England team since 1995, is frustrated at his fringe status. He has been in the England squad for several years but has not been able to establish himself as a regular. He has been in the squad for several years but has not been able to establish himself as a regular. He has been in the squad for several years but has not been able to establish himself as a regular.

Board batters England with another crisis

ANOTHER THREAT, another crisis, another opportunity for the England cricket board. The board has established a big-time cricketing equivalent of the Bill and Monica show: all mouth, no trousers, oceans of scandal. Having been briefly kicked out of the Five Nations Championship for ignoring one of the ultimatums recently issued from the Dublin headquarters of the world game, poor old England have until tea-time today to meet a second, potentially more serious deadline.

The International Board, that merry band of middle-headed bunglers who let the demons of professionalism out of the box in 1995 and have spent the past three and a half years trying to force them back in, are awaiting the Rugby Football Union's response to the guilty verdict passed upon them earlier this month. Twickenham is expected to be a better word, of renegeing on its pledge to show unconditional support for the IB's fight against England's Premiership clubs, who are seeking to establish a raft of commercial rights under European competition law.

Bristol retain Dwyer

BOB DWYER will shortly sign an extension to his contract with Bristol, the Allied Dunbar Premiership Two leaders, that says he will remain as director of rugby until the end of the 2001-02 season. Dwyer will be responsible for the new enlarged squad of players when Bristol's buy-out of London Scottish is completed at the end of the season. He was director of rugby at Leicester Tigers before losing his job along with his assistant, Duncan Hall, last February.

RUGBY UNION

BY CHRIS HEWETT

convoluted approach to jurisprudence, the RFU has been asked to suggest its own punishment. The board's disciplinary committee will consider any Twickenham response before deciding on a sanction, which is certain to be financial because it would be tantamount to suicide to expel the English national team, the biggest money-spinner in the game, from Test competition within nine months of a World Cup. What happens then is anyone's guess; the RFU, fed up to the back teeth of being kicked around by everyone else, may well refuse to pay up and head for the courts instead.

Talking of which, Bristol have threatened to take civil action against the RFU - yes, them again - if any attempt is made to obstruct the West Country club's takeover of London Scottish. "The union could say no to the proposal, but then they could be landing themselves in a legal wrangle," warned Malcolm Pearce, Bristol's millionaire financier, who hatched the buy-out idea as a means of cir-

cumventing any move by the Premiership One clubs to leave his side in the wilderness next season. "If the RFU agree with any wacky scheme that excludes us, they will have a thundering great legal battle on their hands. They are not too good at those at the moment, so I may even enjoy it."

Solicitors representing both clubs met yesterday to finalise the London Scottish asking price and iron out the small print. Meanwhile, Twickenham officials were still waiting for details of the takeover. "We can't come to a view about this until we have received the proper documentation," said a spokesman. "As yet, we've received nothing at all. The clubs have until Friday to come up with the information we need, after which the issue will be properly considered."

One deal that appears to have no future at all is a ground-share arrangement between Bristol and Bath, which was floated by Nick de Scossa, the Bristol chief executive, earlier this week. "There has been no serious discussion about sharing and we are not party to conjecture and speculation," said Bob Calleja, Bath's general manager, last night. Even so, Bath's long-term future at the Recreation Ground, their city centre site for more than a century, is anything but secure. Club officials meet local councillors tomorrow in a renewed effort to win civic support for a radical overhaul of facilities at the Rec and another break-down in talks will leave them searching for alternative accommodation.

South Africa, the reigning world champions, yesterday suffered a personnel setback when Andrew Aitken, one of the most intelligent footballers of his generation, decided to retire at 30 to concentrate on a career in commerce.



Britain's Colin McRae (right) and his co-driver, Nicky Grist, celebrate after finishing third in the Monte Carlo Rally yesterday

McRae delivers tonic to Ford

COLIN McRAE produced a tremendous finish to claim third-place in the Monte Carlo Rally yesterday.

The Scot scored a podium finish well ahead of schedule in his first outing in the Ford Focus, but his celebrations could prove to be short-lived. He has been racing under appeal after his car's water pump was deemed illegal hours before the start of the race.

McRae will lose the four points he collected while during the race if FIA, the sport's world governing body, rule the car is illegal at a hearing next month. If that is the case, he could miss the next two rallies while the pump is replaced.

BY IAN GORDON
in Monte Carlo

"I'll be the victim if they take the points away from me but I don't think it will come to that," McRae said. "I am sure they will get it sorted out in a reasonable way."

It is all very technical and political, and at the end of the day it is Ford's mistake, but it doesn't give the car a performance advantage - it's just a water pump."

McRae, who equalled his highest placing in the event, added: "Never in my wildest dreams could I have imagined

being third in the first rally. This really is a tremendous result for the whole team."

"We weren't bluffing anyone beforehand. Even after our final test in Monte Carlo I didn't feel very confident about our chances, but part of that was me having to get used to a whole new car."

"The next rally is in Sweden, where you have to give it 100 per cent so we will learn a lot more about the car there. That's going to be hard, but then comes Kenya, where I think we can challenge strongly again."

Even if the appeal does go against them - and Ford insist the pump is legal - McRae has

immediately demonstrated the potential of the Focus, which many predicted would not win a point until mid-season.

McRae finished 3min 16sec behind the Mitsubishi of the defending world champion, Tommi Makinen of Finland, with another Finn, Juha Kankkunen, 1:44 behind in second place. But the Scot clocked four fastest times on the special stages as he showed why Ford paid a reported £6million to lure him from Subaru.

He was briefly in trouble on the opening stage, which he started in fourth overall, when the car developed drive-shaft trouble, losing him over a minute before the problem was fixed.

But McRae established a 20-second cushion on the next stage, which he protected on the two timed sections in the mountains above Monte Carlo.

Oxford's Richard Burns, in a Subaru, finished ninth - nearly nine-and-a-half minutes behind his former team-mate Makinen.

This year's title looks destined to head Makinen's way for a fourth consecutive time, as he claimed his team's fifth win in a row, four of them through him.

"It's about time a Finn won in Monte Carlo," he said, ending a 13-year drought for his country. "It's a great feeling, especially as the conditions were the worst I've known."

Schulz confident of landing Tyson fight

WHETHER Mike Tyson's next opponent is Axel Schulz will be decided on Monday at the latest, the German fighter's promoter said yesterday. Schulz, 31, will need a licence by then if the fight is to be staged as expected in Las Vegas on 24 April, according to Wilfried Sauerland, who added that a deal could be struck today when representatives of the Tyson and Schulz camps meet in New York.

Although the blonde German, the loser of three title

BOXING

fights, has been the leading candidate mentioned for Tyson's next outing, other names are also still under consideration like Vaughn Bean and Lou Savarese. But Schulz himself is convinced the fight is a done deal. He is also confident about his chances after watching Tyson struggle to shake off Francois Botha on Saturday. "That's not the old Tyson. This fight will be a big step

forward for me - I'm expecting that I'll win against Tyson," Schulz said on German TV.

A press release from Sauerland's promotion company also suggested that Tyson's camp was having second thoughts about Schulz as an opponent after the Botha fight. Apparently the 39-year-old German, with a record of 24 wins and four defeats in 29 fights including controversial title losses to both Botha and George Foreman, may now be regarded as too tough an opponent. Tyson's

camp had demanded more points for Schulz to study, the promoter said. Schulz would earn at least a \$2m (£1.2m) purse for the fight, his promoters said, with both sides close to agreeing on the exact amount.

A world title shot is the target for the British, Commonwealth and European heavyweight champion, Paul Lloyd, who has teamed up with the promoter Frank Warren. Lloyd has been in impressive form recently, defeating the Frenchman Luigi Mancini for

the vacant European title last month. In September he defended his British and Commonwealth belts against Scotland's Drew Docherty.

Warren pulled Lloyd's signature, saying: "I'm delighted to have Paul on our books and will be looking at world title opportunities in the near future. Paul is a class act who has shown great determination to bounce back from his world title defeat last year. He definitely deserves a second chance when the time is right."

Els looking 'unbeatable'

THE HONEYMOON is likely to continue for newly-married Ernie Els as he seeks to become the first player in more than 20 years to defend his South African Open title when the tournament begins today in Stellenbosch.

Still flushed from clinching his third Alfred Dunhill PGA title by a comfortable four shots last week, the "Big Easy", as Els is known for his easy-going nature, is the overwhelming favourite to make it two in a row this weekend.

GOLF

While rivals sweated their way round the par-71 course yesterday, Els opted for a day on the beach. He is relaxed and confident, said his coach, Robert Baker, who reckons that on his current form the world No 5 looks unbeatable. Among the leading players attempting to bring Els' run of form to an end are Germany's Bernhard Langer, Ian Woosnam and Nick Faldo, who missed the cut at Houghton last

week and is keen to start collecting Ryder Cup points.

Laura Davies had a roller-coaster start to the season last week but is full of confidence ahead of today's Naples LPGA Memorial in Florida. The former world No 1 bounced back from an opening 79 to shoot a course record 65 and finish inside the top 30 in the Healthsouth Inaugural in Orlando. Among the full-strength field will be world No 1 Annika Sorenstam, making her final appearance before a six-week break.

SPORTING DIGEST

BOWLS

WORLD SINGLES CHAMPIONSHIP (Worcestershire, Northants) Third round: (A) Hutton (Wor) 3-1 (P) Price (Nt) 3-7 7-6 2-7 5-3; (K) White (Wor) 3-1 (G) Gurney (Nt) 3-7 7-6 2-7 5-3; (D) Gurney (Nt) 3-1 (J) Taylor (Wor) 7-0 7-0 7-0 7-0.

BOXING

PROFESSIONAL BOUTING (12-round British super-middleweight championship) D. Starke (Bar) vs. F. Starke (Wor) (12-round British super-middleweight championship) D. Starke (Bar) vs. F. Starke (Wor) (12-round British super-middleweight championship) D. Starke (Bar) vs. F. Starke (Wor).

FOOTBALL

FA CUP Third round replay: Postlewood (Notts) 1-0 Sheffield Utd (Preston) 1-0. Postlewood (Notts) 1-0 Sheffield Utd (Preston) 1-0. Postlewood (Notts) 1-0 Sheffield Utd (Preston) 1-0. Postlewood (Notts) 1-0 Sheffield Utd (Preston) 1-0.

POOLS DIVIDENDS

LITTLEWOODS: Treble chance: 23pts £42,747.10; 22 £13,235.25; 21 £25,500.20; 20 £4,000.00; 19 £1,000.00; 18 £250.00; 17 £50.00; 16 £10.00; 15 £2.00; 14 £0.50; 13 £0.10; 12 £0.05; 11 £0.02; 10 £0.01; 9 £0.005; 8 £0.002; 7 £0.001; 6 £0.0005; 5 £0.0002; 4 £0.0001; 3 £0.00005; 2 £0.00002; 1 £0.00001.

RALLYING

MONTE CARLO RALLY Final positions (after 14 timed special stages): 1. M. McRae (Ford Focus) 2. J. Kankkunen (Subaru Impreza) 3. R. Burns (Subaru Impreza) 4. J. Kankkunen (Subaru Impreza) 5. R. Burns (Subaru Impreza) 6. J. Kankkunen (Subaru Impreza) 7. R. Burns (Subaru Impreza) 8. J. Kankkunen (Subaru Impreza) 9. R. Burns (Subaru Impreza) 10. J. Kankkunen (Subaru Impreza) 11. R. Burns (Subaru Impreza) 12. J. Kankkunen (Subaru Impreza) 13. R. Burns (Subaru Impreza) 14. J. Kankkunen (Subaru Impreza) 15. R. Burns (Subaru Impreza) 16. J. Kankkunen (Subaru Impreza) 17. R. Burns (Subaru Impreza) 18. J. Kankkunen (Subaru Impreza) 19. R. Burns (Subaru Impreza) 20. J. Kankkunen (Subaru Impreza) 21. R. Burns (Subaru Impreza) 22. J. Kankkunen (Subaru Impreza) 23. R. Burns (Subaru Impreza) 24. J. Kankkunen (Subaru Impreza) 25. R. Burns (Subaru Impreza) 26. J. Kankkunen (Subaru Impreza) 27. R. Burns (Subaru Impreza) 28. J. Kankkunen (Subaru Impreza) 29. R. Burns (Subaru Impreza) 30. J. 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SPORT

MURALITHARAN VICTIM OF SPIN P24 • WOLVES AT ARSENAL'S DOOR P28

Fans win better deal on tickets

AS THE organisers of the Euro 2000 finals yesterday provided details of how they hope to avoid the kind of ticketing fiasco that marred last year's World Cup in France, their plans were given a cautious welcome by the Football Supporters' Association.

Outlining how seats will be sold for the tournament - to be co-hosted by the Netherlands and Belgium between 10 June and 2 July next year - a Euro 2000 spokesman said there will be no preferential treatment for the host countries' fans, that tickets for every game will be freely available across Europe, and that there will be no direct allocation of tickets to profiteering travel agents. "We are absolutely convinced there will be no repeat of the World Cup situation," the spokesman said.

Of the 1.2m tickets available for Euro 2000's 31 matches, 37 per cent will be sold on a Europe-wide basis from the end of March. Fans will be able to apply for up to two tickets per game via application forms which will be available from national football associations and the organisers. Applications for these 37 per cent of tickets will

FOOTBALL
BY NICK HARRIS

be accepted for around a month and successful buyers will be notified by 25 June. If there are more applicants than tickets, the seats - likely to range from around £20 for the cheapest at group games to around £90 for the best places at the final - will be allocated by drawing lots. The organisers expect demand to be high, especially among fans of the Netherlands and Belgium, the only teams whose first-round fixtures have been confirmed. As hosts they have both already qualified.

A further 33 per cent of tickets (twice the figure allocated for the World Cup) will be divided between fans of the two nations competing in each game. These will be distributed via national associations after the draw for the finals in December. Nineteen per cent of tickets will go to corporate sponsors and the hospitality market, eight per cent to the media, and the remainder to the world and European governing bodies, Fifa and Uefa.

"It's very pleasing that tick-

ets will be freely available to fans across Europe and that a third will be given to competing countries," Alison Pilling, the chair of the Football Supporters' Association, said. "But there's still this problem that every ticket going into corporate hands, which will be nearly 20 per cent, doesn't go to a genuine fan."

According to the Euro 2000 organisers, security is a major priority and every ticket will be printed with the name of the buyer to deter black market trading. The only way that third parties will officially be allowed to trade in tickets, a spokesman said, is if a national association sanctions a tour operator to market its allocation of tickets. The onus for fair allocation and affordable prices will still rest with footballing bodies, he added.

For France 98, the organising committee (CFO) reserved around 60 per cent of tickets for French citizens. Demand by English and Scottish fans outnumbered available tickets by more than 10 to one, and there were complaints that tour operators were profiteering by selling tickets costing as little as £18 as part of £800 one-day packages. When the CFO - facing accusations that its allocation procedures were illegal under European competition law - opened its infamous ticket hotline, overseas callers' chances of getting through were estimated at two million to one. Problems peaked at the tournament itself, when tens of thousands of fans found they had been victims of 'phantom ticket' sellers, where no seats were forthcoming despite having been paid for in advance.

The Euro 2000 organisers' plans were drawn up specifically to avoid such problems. The CFO may yet face a multi-million pound fine for its arrangements and will meet with European Community officials in Brussels tomorrow to argue why it should not be penalised.

Arsenal to extend defenders' contracts

ARSENAL'S VETERAN defenders Steve Bould, Nigel Winterburn and Lee Dixon are all expected to be offered extensions to their contracts by their manager, Arsène Wenger.

Bould's and Winterburn's contracts expire at the end of the season and both have been offered 12-month extensions. Dixon has been invited to negotiate a new contract. Wenger said yesterday: "The situation with all three players should be sorted out by the end of January, but don't be surprised if all three are at Highbury next season."

Bould, 36, Winterburn, 35, and Dixon, 34, together with captain Tony Adams, 32, have been part of the Arsenal defence for the last 11 years. In this period Arsenal have won the league three times, the FA Cup twice, the European Cup-Winners' Cup and the League Cup.

Adams and Martin Keown, 32, (who has also played a major part in the club's success over the last decade) remain under contract for next season. Between them, the five players have appeared in almost 1,700 matches for Arsenal.



Tim Henman serves in his five-set struggle against Sandon Stolle in Melbourne yesterday

Empics

Henman conjures great escape

TENNIS
BY DERRICK WHYTE
in Melbourne

TIM HENMAN came close to adding to his dismal record in the Australian Open yesterday when he fell two sets to one behind against Sandon Stolle, the Australian ranked 246 in the world. In the end, the British sixth seed escaped to win 4-6, 7-5, 4-6, 6-1, 6-4 in just over three hours.

Last year the British No 1 lost in the first round here and he has never progressed beyond the third round. Yesterday it was not hard to see why. During the course of the Centre Court match, the world No 7 missed a succession of shots that he would normally put away with ease, two of them simply awful smashes.

"I don't know if my eyes were shut or looking elsewhere," Henman said afterwards. "That's definitely not the way to execute the overhead." But he remained positive. "It builds confidence to know you can win when at times you are not playing your best," he added. "But in future rounds I've got to try and not dig holes for myself."

Henman's service continued to be suspect and it is hard to see how he can continue to make significant progress when there is such an inconsistency in the game's most important shot. Astonishingly, against a player who does not have a particularly destructive return of serve, he lost his first three service games, though he recovered from 5-1 down to lose the first set 6-4.

Henman's volleying, too, was erratic and he admitted that he was lucky to recover in the second set, agreeing that Stolle had two bad line decisions at 5-4. Having been given that lifeline the British No 1 did his best to throw it away again, losing his own serve again at the start of the third set. Henman could not save that set, but he did save the match and Stolle said: "Tim knows he escaped."

Henman now faces a third round match against the big hitting Swiss Marc Rosset - the 67th former world No 9 who is now down to 31st in the rankings.

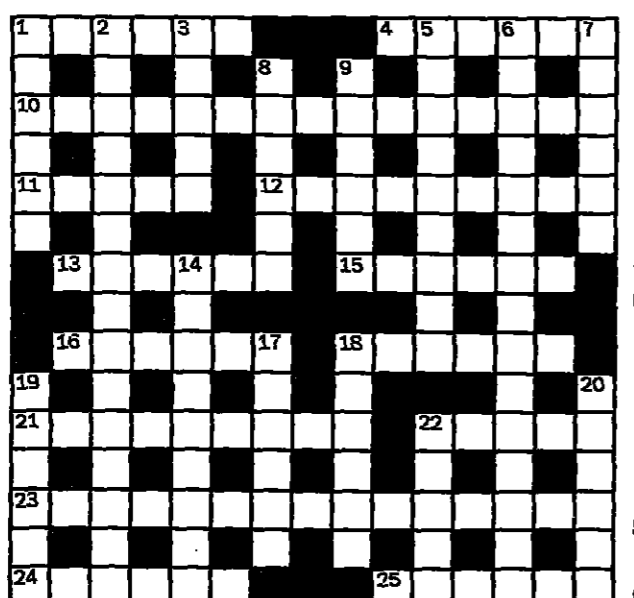
More reports, page 27
Results, Digest, page 28

THE THURSDAY CROSSWORD

No.3825 Thursday 21 January

by Phil

Wednesday's solution



CHANCES SUNSPOT
A K H C P E I A
T R I G O N O M E T R I C A L
C I T Y W I N T E R
R I M E R L A B E R I U S
B I B W H E
R A N D O M I S E R E E D S
T V M L E P
S E S T I O N S U
C O P Y R I G H T M A T E R
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E Y T O I S C R E
R E S E R V E T U E S D A Y

- ACROSS**
- 1 Clear little daughter will be rocked in this? (6)
 - 4 Mother's to request material (6)
 - 10 Being ignored, in the judgement of senior managers? (5,2,3,5)
 - 11 A physician goes round hospital without any formal plan (2,3)
 - 12 Perfume? You'll find a bit in the land of Chanel (9)
 - 13 Found cattle food, getting a sticky substance (6)
 - 15 Mostly see place of debauchery as perversed (6)
 - 16 A great many dogs will have no hint of pedigree (6)

- 18 Dramatist, British, realistic (5)
 - 21 Coastal resort seen as most vulgar, frequently (9)
 - 22 Major collection of religious texts - and one who'll misuse them? (5)
 - 23 London area getting all hot in riots? (7,4,4)
 - 24 Little chance to ditch student that's crude (6)
 - 25 Sticks around Northern French resort (6)
- DOWN**
- 1 Drink is able to leave middle of kitchen in lift (6)
 - 2 Skate with no rollers? An oddity (1,4,3,2,5)
 - 3 Reasoning a mathematical quantity leads in in-

- 5 Integral calculus (5)
- 6 Begin cooking with a rue or some other vegetable (9)
- 6 Like teetotallers, perhaps, showing a perverse attitude (7,3,5)
- 7 Kind child longing to be picked up (6)
- 8 The old trapped in ramshackle five - there's a sight (6)
- 9 Most of the conflict's tense and cross (6)
- 14 Playwright's money's associated with spoken legend (9)
- 17 Who leaving horrible smell in nose? Not half (6)
- 18 Interrupt, almost providing objections (4,2)
- 19 A sideswipe from good weapon (5)
- 20 Capital way of identifying leading characters in assembly (6)
- 22 New label showing name (5)

IOC report shows 'decades of bribery'

OLYMPIC GAMES
BY KIERAN DALEY

A CONFIDENTIAL International Olympic Committee report into the Salt Lake City Olympic scandal admits that bribery went back decades and reveals that up to 16 IOC members could be expelled for their involvement in the affair.

The report will be delivered this weekend when the six-man IOC executive committee meets in Lausanne to decide what action to take. Informal sources indicate that it shows that Salt Lake City spent more than £400,000 in gifts and payments during and after winning the 2002 Winter Games.

The report also outlines how influence-peddling by bidding cities and IOC members goes back decades and details the activities of two unofficial agents who contacted bidding cities. One offered to deliver 25 votes for £1.3m. Another promised nine European votes for £30,000-£50,000 each.

Although Pound insists that the IOC has done nothing criminal, he warns that an investigation being carried out by the US Justice Department poses serious problems. "We will have to consider what the position of the IOC will be if we are served with a subpoena to appear in front of a grand jury. This is a particularly odious procedural part of criminal law in which the accused virtually have no rights. It was a grand jury which dealt with Clinton matters," the report says.

In a separate revelation, Pound admitted he once turned

down a \$1m (£500,000) bribe. "I once got offered a million bucks in connection with a television deal," he said in a speech earlier this week. "And I said: 'Please, you don't have to offer me a million bucks. I want to do this because it's right [for the Olympics].'"

Pound refused to reveal details of the incident, saying only that his comment was intended to show the high standards to which IOC members should strive in light of the bribery scandal. Meanwhile, the mayor of Nagano said that the city's Olympic bidding committee's decision to destroy its expense books had been proper and merely "the Japanese way of doing things."

Mayor Tasuku Tsukada said he left the decision on how to destroy the expense books to other officials. He explained that the expenses were approved at the committee's general meeting and that meant, as a matter of course, that the records could be destroyed. "In Japan, that means it's all done and finished," he said.

Some IOC officials inspecting Nagano as a possible site for the 1998 Winter Games were entertained by geisha, an official admitted yesterday. But he denied they were prostitutes. "We couldn't very well have had the governor pour drinks," Sumikazu Yamaguchi, a member of the bidding committee,

said. "All they did was pour drinks and dance."

In Australia, an official of Melbourne's failed 1996 Olympic bid revealed that the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra held a special concert so that the piano-playing daughter of a South Korean IOC member could show off her musical talents.

The novelist Shane Maloney said the bidding committee encouraged the orchestra to invite the girl to play with them and the concert drew a packed house. "Certainly they [the MSO] were prompted at our suggestion to invite her," Maloney said. "I think she probably tinkles in the C division, rather than the A, but certainly she's a competent pianist." Despite Australia's magnanimous gesture, Atlanta's bid won the Games.

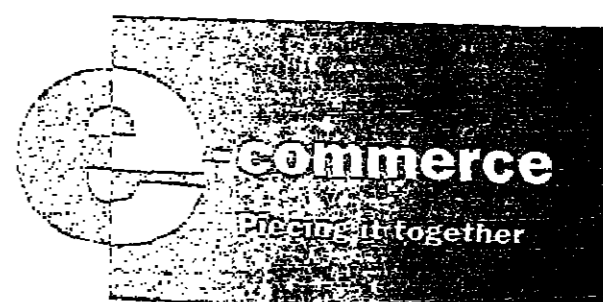
Vitaly Smirnov, the head of the Russian Olympic Committee and a former IOC vice president and executive board member, said the Salt Lake City bribery scandal is part of a plot to oust the IOC president, Juan Antonio Samaranch, according to an interview published yesterday.

"I'm absolutely sure that someone wanted to oust Samaranch, to force him to resign under the wave of criticism. And then replace him with someone else who would carry out a different policy," he said. "Who? Many people don't like Samaranch, many people want to profit from the Olympic movement, commercialise it. Ted Turner and Rupert Murdoch have their vision of sport's future."

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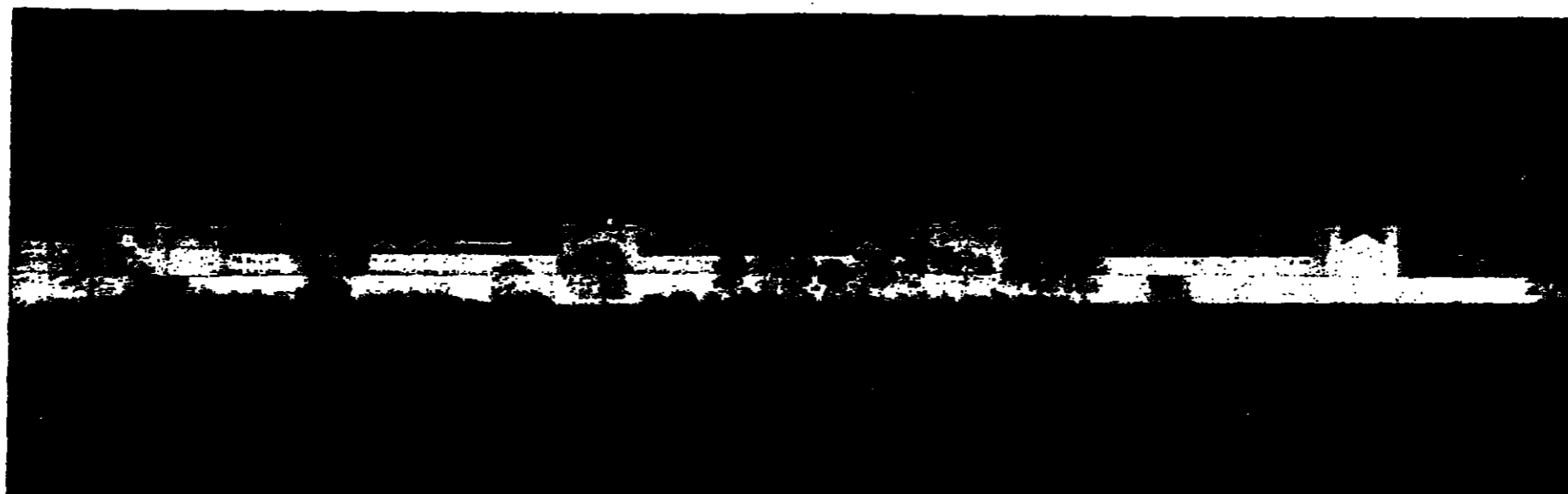
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THURSDAY REVIEW

COMMENT • FEATURES • ARTS • LISTINGS • TELEVISION



Michael Grieve

Lifers

There are 4,000 'lifers' in Britain, more than the rest of Europe put together. Men like Alan, who broke a man's nose and found himself banged up in a prison full of 'killers'. Five years into his sentence, he's still not got over the shock...

BY JACK O'SULLIVAN

Alan is 38 and doing life for murder. You can still hear his sense of shock at what has happened to him, five years after a court sent him down. "When I first got life off, for murder," he says, "I thought, 'God almighty, I'm going to a jail where there are killers.'" Indeed, he does not seem quite to appreciate why he is here at all. "You must understand," he confides, "there are people in here who have done a particular crime, where it wasn't a malicious thing. In my own case, I broke a man's nose and he died because he was drunk and he choked, so therefore I have a life sentence for killing the man. Fair enough. I accept that. But when people class everybody in the lifer system as the same, that's when things are not right."

He has a point. Lifers are not your average jailbirds. They vary a great deal, and are also different from the rest of the prison population. Often they are older and better educated.

And there are more and more of them. Last year, the number in England and Wales exceeded 4,000 for the first time. That is more than the rest of western Europe put together, according to a new study from the Prison Reform Trust. Every year, 300 more join the ranks of these "prisoner pensioners". Meanwhile, only 80 or 90 get out. Those remaining are behind bars for longer: for almost 15 years on average compared with about 10 in the Seventies. Slowly, lifers are taking over the system.

All classes of people commit murder. That is clear from the years of interviews with lifers, conducted for the Prison Reform Trust report. And when murderers are caught, they find themselves in a bureaucratic machine far more complicated than anything other prisoners experience. Everyone they encounter is writing a report that could influence their release date - a report the prisoner will not see: even a chaplain who may never have spoken to the prisoner. It is a bizarre world. Inmates have little idea when they will get out. The rules determining when they may be freed are rarely explained.

As a result, prisoners must guess at a wise strategy, weighing up the risks of bad behaviour. If you are smart you don't smoke dope, but you may take a chance on heroin. That way you will probably escape detection by mandatory drug-testing.

"If you smoke cannabis," says one lifer, "it can last 30 days in the system. This stuff [heroin] only lasts two days, so they can chance it over the weekend. Even boys that never touched it before, they're on it."

Twisted logic rules. For example, an inmate who keeps his nose clean may find that he has made a mistake. He will learn to understand what other inmates call "mind games". "If you are a model prisoner," warns Alan, "you can get penalised, because they think that's not showing the real you. If you are really a model prisoner, they ask themselves, 'why are you in here for killing somebody?'"

"It is a classic catch-22 situation," says Stephen Shaw, the director of the Prison Reform Trust. "If a prisoner behaves too well, then he may be accused of not addressing his offence. If he behaves badly, he may be thought unfit for release."

Somehow, you have to stay sane. It is why, from Wormwood Scrubs, Alan tries so hard to stay in touch with the outside. He knows that he must keep contact with that changing world beyond the prison walls.

Those relationships will be needed one day in the future, when

he is freed. They may keep him from crime, maybe even save him from suicide.

But it isn't easy. Alan relies on weekly wages, which buy just over 12 minutes' phone time. "I try phoning at least twice, three times a week," he says. "I get 37 seconds for a unit, but a guy who lives locally can get 67 seconds. For me a £2 phone card, which is dear - it's two days' wages - lasts me around five minutes. Whereas a local chap can stay on the phone for 20 minutes."



Morris Carpenter/Insight

Twelve minutes. Not long to keep up with three children and his parents in Devon. Like many lifers, Alan has seen his marriage collapse. He has not had a visit in two months because Wormwood Scrubs is too far away. The four-hour journey from Devon, for his retired parents, is arduous - his mother has had arthritis. "She leaves on a Friday night to get here on a Saturday morning. She's got to stay overnight in a freezing cold flat for a half-hour visit. It's not on. I lost my marriage because of it, because there was no contact. I've got three children and I'm lucky to see them three times a year."

It's a familiar story in London, where the Scrubs is filled with people from parts of the country that do not have appropriate facilities for lifers, particularly at the beginning of their sentences. In some ways, however, Alan is glad to be with other lifers. There is less pressure. He had a terrible time, he says, when he was first sentenced in a local jail.

"You're trying to get your head round starting a life sentence. You want to try to cope with your own emotions and your own problems without somebody who is moaning about having three months, and he's got two weeks to do."

It can take a long time for a lifer to come to terms with what has happened. Jim is five years into his term. The loss of your first appeal is, he now realises, the moment of truth. "This is where

the burden really starts." He is also trying to manage the outside world in his head. "You're stuck here in a time zone. Really and truly, you are thinking of when you came in, because you are not growing on the outside. So when people come in and you think something is not all right, it is often because they have grown, they're evolving. You are still slowed down, very, very slow."

Jim's comments are ironic because, despite this slowness, lifers age more quickly than folk on the outside. American research reveals that illnesses that typically afflict men in their fifties, such as heart disease, often debilitate prisoners in their forties.

However, Jim's sense of life speeding by reflects a general craving among lifers for fresh knowledge of the world outside.

"It would be nice if you had someone you could get information from," says Mike. "It's like, you go and buy CDs, but you're buying them blind. You're spending £10 or £15 on a CD and it's not really what you wanted, because for 13 years you've had no one there giving you information."

Without such help you can quickly be in trouble. "Some guys have no family and, two years into their bid, they're struggling because they have no contact," says Jim. "I think it has a lot to do with feeling wanted. If you knew people before, then when you come here and they don't want to see you, you feel that you're not wanted, because nobody in here is going to want you."

"Some people come in here and they have nobody. They go outside and they have nobody again. They reoffend and the courts vilify them: 'Why are you reoffending, ra ra ra?' They don't understand why? You put me in a dodgy little, dingy little bedsite, you give me some idiot amount of money and expect me to get on with life. I mean, there's only a few people that grit their teeth and say, 'I'm digging my feet in and I'm not going back to jail.' Not everyone's got that character. Some suicide. Some turn back to crime. It's rotten because it all stems from how you are in here."

Yet even when your family does visit, it is hard to communicate with them in such a false situation as a prison visit. That bothers Jim. "You know yourself, when you're around your family at home you don't feel you need to speak. You just chill, watch TV or whatever. But when you're up for a visit, you feel you have to talk because they've come to see you. But I just want to see them, not talk to them the whole time."

Sometimes my brothers come and they just relax and get a conversation going on between them. It's like I'm on the outside looking in, because I've lost a lot of time with them. Therefore I haven't got a clue about half the things they talk about. But I can sit there and see it. Sometimes I'll just be smiling because I don't feel put on the spot, and they're relaxing and just being normal. So I can have a part in that normality."

It is a normality that can easily be shattered, says Paul, who is serving a life sentence for killing a man in a brawl. He recalls a visit from his wife. "I was on a visit," he recalls, "when one of the screws decided to say to her: 'What the fucking hell are you doing here visiting murderers?' She'd been here every week and that's the first time anybody had said anything like that to her... there was nearly a fight between me and the screws."

Paul knows how dangerous it is if his family becomes alienated by the treatment they receive. "They should lay off the families, when they come in to visit you," he says, "because they know that for a lot of people that's their only source of support at all. If that goes, then you can guarantee when a prisoner comes back into his cell he'll go mad - not probably swinging from the end of a landing-rope, but he'll kick off. He'll say: 'What's the point

of me doing anything else? It's all up the tubes; let's go for it."

Alan seeks some understanding. "All I am asking is to treat me like a human being. I've got family. I've got children. I was a businessman on the outside. I'm not an animal - please don't treat me like one. That's all I ask, and I'll cope with my sentence. And I will cope with it better if you ease the pressure."

The prisoners' identities have been disguised

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Stop killing Iraqis

Sir: At the end of 1998, the United States and the United Kingdom once again rained bombs on the people of Iraq. But even when the bombs stop falling, the war against the people of Iraq continues through the harsh economic sanctions. This is a call to action to end all the war.

This month US/UK policy will kill 4,500 children under the age of five in Iraq, according to UN studies, just as it did last month and the month before that, all the way back to 1991. Since the end of the Gulf War, hundreds of thousands—maybe more than 1 million—Iraqis have died as a result of the UN sanctions, which are a direct result of US/UK policy.

This is not foreign policy, it is sanctioned mass-murder that is nearing holocaust proportions. If we remain silent, we are condoning a mass slaughter that is being perpetrated in our name.

For several years, individuals and groups have been delivering medicine and other supplies to Iraq in defiance of the blockade. Now, members of one of those groups, Voices in the Wilderness in Chicago, have been threatened with massive fines by the US government for "exportation of donated goods, including medical supplies and toys, to Iraq (without) specific prior authorisation". The US government is harassing a peace group that takes medicine and toys to dying children; we owe these courageous activists our support.

The time has come for a call to action to people of conscience. We need an international campaign to lift the sanctions. Such a campaign is not equivalent to support for the regime of Saddam Hussein. To oppose the sanctions is to support the Iraqi people. Our moral responsibility is to counter the hypocrisy and inhumanity of our leaders. This issue must be discussed in every household and every public forum.

NOAM CHOMSKY
EDWARD HERMAN
EDWARD SAID
HOWARD ZINN
Department of Journalism
University of Texas
Austin, Texas
rjensen@uts.cc.utexas.edu

Pregnant teens

Sir: Lynn Eaton's article "The morning after could be too late" (19 January) highlights why it is important for emergency contraception to be more readily available. The problem lies in GPs who insist on appointments only in 2-3 days' time, overburdened casualty departments and fewer family planning clinics.

Last year I launched a campaign in the House of Commons for the deregulation of emergency contraception. I tabled an early day motion which is backed by more than 80 MPs with cross-party support. The campaign is backed by the Family Planning Association, the Birth Control Trust, the Brook Advisory Service, the British Medical Association, the British Pregnancy Advisory Service, the Royal Pharmaceutical Society and the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists.

A pilot scheme in Washington State, USA, allows emergency contraception to be available on prescription under a protocol agreed by doctors to allow their local nurses and pharmacists to dispense it. The nurses and pharmacists are trained to ask the right questions. There would be no difficulty in making emergency contraception available in the UK in this way.

Emergency contraception is not a substitute for better sex education or regular contraception. However, emergency contraception is a practical way to deal with the world as it is and its wider use would prevent the high rate of abortion amongst young women in this country. We have the highest teenage pregnancy rate in western Europe: 8.5 per 1,000 amongst under-16-year-olds and 8.5 per 1,000 for 16- to 19-year-olds. One

half to one third of these pregnancies end in abortion.

Proposals to make emergency contraception more readily available do not make women more vulnerable. Young women are most vulnerable when they have nobody to turn to.

Dr JENNY TONGE MP
(Lib Dem, Richmond Park)
House of Commons
London SW1

Water chemicals

Sir: Dr Adrian Padfield (letter, 16 January) shows admirable concern for his patients but he is sadly mistaken when he refers to dental caries being "easily prevented by simple water management, as with the reduction of bacterial disease".

I have been involved, as an engineer, with the treatment of water for public supply for thirty years and know only too well the range of quite unpleasant chemicals which are used in that process, including chlorine to kill bacteria, ozone to destroy potential carcinogens and phosphoric acid to prevent dissolution of lead.

These chemicals are used to render the final product safe to drink. Fluoride is the only chemical currently added to water supplies for the sole purpose of medication or prophylaxis. This is a most important distinction. Worthy though it may be to reduce dental caries, compulsory mass medication via water supply is the thin end of a very dangerous political wedge and should, I believe, be strenuously resisted.

Millions of tons of water are treated every day, only a tiny fraction of which is ingested. If, as Dr Padfield clearly believes, there should be some form of compulsory mass medication, then let it be by the compulsory addition of fluoride to all toothpastes. This would not only be more efficient in treating the disease but would, I suspect, be rather more cost-effective.

RICHARD HILL
Penn, Buckinghamshire

Acts of tyranny

Sir: With regard to the case of General Pinochet, it is interesting to note the judgement in US v Noriega, June 1990.

Counsel for General Noriega, the former Panamanian leader, argued that Noriega was immune from prosecution as a head of state and diplomat, and that his alleged narcotics offences constituted acts of state not properly reviewable by the court.

Judge Hoeveler, United States District Judge, commented that "the doctrine of head of state immunity provides that a head of state is not subject to the jurisdiction of foreign courts, at least as to official acts taken during the ruler's term of office.... Criminal activities such as the narcotics trafficking with which defendant is charged can hardly be considered official acts or governmental duties which promote a sovereign state's interests."

He concluded that "Noriega was the *de facto* head of Panama's government. But simply because Noriega may have in fact run the country of Panama does not mean he is entitled to head of state immunity, since the grant of immunity is a privilege which the

Sir: I am a retired female academic, interested, *inter alia*, in politics, the arts, literature, travel and especially music. I like listening to discussions and plays also.

Far from considering that Radios 3 and 4 have been "dumbed" down, I have to ration my day's listening, otherwise no work at all would be done by me in this house.

Dr M E WOOD
Welwyn Garden City,
Hertfordshire

Sir: Just because Hong Kong people don't receive social welfare of the type seen in Britain does not mean that the

United States may withhold from any claimant.... His claim to a 'right' of immunity against the express wishes of the government is wholly without merit."

It could likewise be argued that torture and conspiracy to torture do not constitute official acts or governmental duties.

PAUL TANNER
London SE15

Pleasant Paxman

Sir: As competitors in the current series of University Challenge, we were somewhat surprised by the widespread media coverage given to Mr Lance Haward, the 62-year-old member of the Open University's team.

We were particularly taken aback by the tone of his interview in *The Independent*, containing as it did much criticism of Mr Jeremy Paxman. Whilst Mr Paxman is noted by the media for his occasionally brusque manner, he was actually extremely pleasant towards all the contestants in the series, as were the entire production team. We feel that to compare Mr Paxman unfavourably with Bamber Gascoigne, a quizmaster with an entirely different style, is a gross discourtesy given all he did to put

teams at their ease during filming. Far from demonstrating "stumbling, hesitation and swearing", Mr Paxman exuded professionalism and erudition at all times.

To claim that he "seems to have met his match" in Lance Haward will have surprised all those who were present during filming.

DAVID STAINER
ROBERT DOUGANS
DAVID BREWIS
TOBY COX
Oriel College University
Challenge team
Oxford

Ban this cruelty

Sir: It is not surprising that Nigel Burke (letter, 19 January) attempts to play down public support for a ban on hunting with dogs. As opinion polls have shown time and time again, both public and parliamentary support for a ban remain consistently high because hunting is a cruel and unnecessary "sport".

It is a strange argument, however, to suggest that reducing or eliminating unnecessary suffering to animals is an infringement of civil liberties or is in some way "liberal". Perhaps the best illustration of the

absurdity of this argument is to consider just how things would be if such logic had been accepted by earlier governments.

Bull- and bear-baiting would never have been outlawed and people would be free to beat or starve their pets. In fact the law would not have developed to stop many of the worst abuses against animals or humans and practices such as child labour or slavery would still be legal in Britain.

CHARLOTTE MORRISSEY
Deadline 2000
Campaign for the Protection of
Hunted Animals
Horsham, West Sussex

No job, no home

Sir: Your report (15 January) that Labour plans to cut mortgage help for people who lose their jobs sits strangely with Mr Blair's declaration that he wants to appeal to the middle-class vote. What could be more unsettling to a homeowner than to be told that, if they lose their job, they might also lose their house?

The last government cut help to home owners in these circumstances by delaying the payment of income support on mortgage interest for nine months. The present government has been engaged in talks with the mortgage and insurance industries to find ways of closing the gap, but all the evidence shows that people who are most vulnerable either do not have insurance or cannot get the insurer to pay out.

The Chancellor has so far held back from ending mortgage interest tax relief, which still costs £2bn. Why not phase out this indiscriminate subsidy and use the money to provide better support to the most vulnerable owners? This would help to cut repossessions, and save money that councils spend on housing the repossessed.

JOHN FERRY
Director of Policy
Chartered Institute of Housing
Coventry

Urban worrier

Sir: Gentrification of our inner cities is not a comprehensive solution to urban decline (report, 14 January). Unless we promote low-skilled jobs in our cities, those living there shall be outbid in the housing market by the middle class moving back in. The result could be an urban structure common to many European cities where the rich live near the city centre and the poor in the outskirts.

Studio flats, art galleries and cafes may look nice, but are of little benefit to people bearing the brunt of economic restructuring.

DONALD HOUSTON
Department of Urban Studies
University of Glasgow

Sir: I found the reported attitude of the Countryside Alliance to the idea of ending Miras tax relief on homes built on greenfield sites curiously negative (Your Money, 16 January). In this predominantly rural district residents do not want to see green fields disappear under concrete to meet an insatiable and inherently self-defeating mass demand to "live in the countryside".

Certainly existing property and residents must not be penalised, but abolishing Miras on new greenfield developments is, potentially, a powerful lever to protect both the countryside and existing residents' interests, and the measure must get serious debate. Of course it will not please the £40,000-per-house land-value hopefuls.

KEN BLANSHARD
Burgess Hill
The writer is leader of Mid Sussex district council

Runaway family

Sir: Your leading article "The Bramleys have bucked a bad system" (18 January) was wrong to portray the Bramleys as victims of Cambridgeshire Social Services. Whilst most of us can agree, in the aftermath of events, that prospective adopters' legal rights to challenge decisions need overhauling, it still remains far from clear that they are suitable parents for the Bennett children.

It is naive to describe their parental shortcomings as stemming from "too much love". Whatever else this experience is set to teach these two unfortunate children, it can presumably not include any notion of the discipline and respect for unpleasant obligations with which most genuinely loving, responsible parents attempt to imbue their children's upbringing.

ALEX GREY
Richmond, Surrey

War's first casualty

Sir: John Lichfield in his article (9 January) on Pegasus Bridge suggested that Lieutenant Danny Broderidge of the Ox & Bucks (gliders) "became the first Allied casualty of the D-Day invasion at 20 minutes past midnight on 6 June 1944". That is not wrong, but it depends upon the criteria by which one judges. What of those Royal Navy and Royal Engineers wet-suit swimmers, dropped by submarines, who tested the beaches, for instance?

In Oxford's military cemetery is a war grave recording that Lance Corporal R T Hall of 2 Para was buried there on 6 June. He was shot by his own camp guards while doing the round of the five airbases involved in the night-time drop. Why should he not be the first D-Day casualty?

Dom ALBERIC STACPOOLE
Ampleforth Abbey
York

Unfair exchange

Sir: In 1876, Bismarck noted that the Balkans were not worth the bones of a single Pomeranian grenadier. Could Paddy Ashdown ("We cannot allow the Serbs to attempt a 'final solution'", 20 January) or you kindly convert this into British soldiers at the 1999 rate of exchange?

ALASTAIR MEEKS
London SE13

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Post letters to Letters to the Editor, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, London E14 5DL and include a daytime telephone number, fax to 0171 293 2056 or e-mail to letters@independent.co.uk. E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address. Letters may be edited for length and clarity



Tough Guys No 4: It's a veritable bridge of thighs for the competitors in this month's annual Tough Guys race, in Staffordshire

Kalpesh Lathigra

IN BRIEF

government or the people of our country are cold-hearted ("Island with cold heart feels the Big Chill", 18 January).

In many Asian cultures, including the Chinese, a sense of family and self-reliance is deep-rooted; that some old people have been neglected during the harsh winter months points to the failure of their families to take care of them. It does not mean the government is insensitive to their plight.

UMER M AHMED
London, WC1

Sir: I find myself alternately puzzled and infuriated by the Royal Mail's unequal delivery times for first-class post. Letters sent to me from the Bristol area invariably arrive here the following day but it is a different story for letters sent from London and the Home Counties.

My latest record is five days for a letter posted in Slough and franked 14 January. It arrived on 19 January. Why should we pay 26 pence per letter for this gross inefficiency? I have known a second-class letter to arrive the next day.

Mrs LINDY MCKINNEL
Lymm, Cheshire

The legend of Sir Alastair Campbell and the green king

TODAY WE bring you another extract from the fabulous rediscovered Shakespearean historical tragedy, *The History of King Tony or New Labour's Lost Love*, which tells the story of King Tony's rise to power and his struggle to keep the throne he has won in battle against the Tory army. Last week we saw King Tony's triumphant meeting with King Nelson of South Africa. Now troubled waters await him back home...

A privy chamber in the King's palace in Downing Street. King Tony is deep in conversation with his last remaining adviser, Sir Alastair Campbell. Tony: All my erstwhile friends desert me, all Sir Geoffrey Robinson, Paymaster General, whom I was wont to ask for business tips - He always knew which shares to buy or sell - And Mandelson! Sir Peter Mandelson! That very gentle knight who knew my thoughts almost before they came into my mind! They've gone, these friends, as fair winds fade at sea, And left my sails all flapping, empty, useless...

Sir Alastair: Not all, Your Majesty! Some still there are Who long to serve you till their dying day. Tony: And who might they be when they are at home?

Sir A: Why, me, Your Majesty! Through thick and thin I shall attempt to guard you 'gainst your foes! Tony: Campbell, good Campbell, thou art indeed a friend.

But how can one prevail one against so many? Canst kill my enemies all by thyself? Sir A: There is no need. I never take a sword Or naked metal 'gainst my enemies. That is the way of brainless warriors To cut and hew and carve the opposition. Far better 'tis to cut and hew the news! What serves it to have gained a victory If all the world thinks you do emerge the loser? Tony: I'm not so sure I see where you are driving... Sir A: Then let me quickly put you straight again. You've no doubt read about this pair, the Bramleys? Tony: Bramley? A kind of apple, is it not?



MILES KINGTON

Sir Alastair: 'God give us strength. Some kings inherit thrones But not the brains that should accompany them'

Sir A: [Aside] God give us strength. Some kings inherit thrones But not the brains that should accompany them.

[Aloud] They are a married pair, my lord, who have kidnapped two girls and run away with them. Tony: Then they should be arrested straightaway And thrown into the Tower of London! Sir A: But that disgrace will never come to pass. The Bramleys have the public on their side And all they ask can never be denied! You see the lesson which I seek to draw? Tony: I think so. What you're trying to say Is that I should go on the run today Taking two lovely little children with me... Sir A: No, no, my liege. What you must see is this: That once you have the press and media tamed You have the victory already claimed! Tony: It's true! I see it now! Yes, you are right! A relaunch now will put my toes to flight! [There is a disturbance at the door.] But hold! Who comes? And why is there this noise? Enter Paddy, Earl of Ashdown, with sword drawn. Paddy: 'Tis I, my Lord! The Earl of Ashdown here. Ready to take my place right at your side Which you did promise me once, long ago.

Tony: Fie, Ashdown, fie! I do not need you now. That day is gone. Be you gone too, likewise. Paddy: Ah yes, your way! The Third Way, is it not? Everyone knows the Third Way comes from me. And now you steal it from me unashamed! I'd sooner side with baby-face Lord Hague Than trust myself to you and all your ways. The public sees your waving hands and smiles But I have seen your scurvy tricks and wiles! Tony: Go then, to Hague! Take on his British ways! And do what'er the little bumpkin says! Exit Ashdown, furiously waving his sword. Sir A: Well, said, my Lord! You sent the upstart packing. Ereunt both. From behind a pillar comes Ken, Livingstone: You laugh now, Campbell, you obsequious creep! But when I'm Mayor of London, you'll both weep! More of this anon, I trow.

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Mr Ashdown's fight for reform ends in ultimate failure

THE UNEXPECTED exit of Paddy Ashdown is a classic illustration of Enoch Powell's dictum that all political careers end in failure. That may be an unfair assessment of his full contribution over the past 10 years, which started with his rescue of the fractured alliance between the Liberals and the SDP in 1988. He built the merged party into a surprisingly coherent, strong and electorally secure third force. We salute his great achievement in rebuilding that party, enabling it to provide much-needed opposition in many of the one-party states of local government, and in helping to break down many of the tribal assumptions of British politics.

But yesterday's announcement is ultimately an admission that his strategy for going beyond that is not working. He wanted a realignment of British politics - but it was a realignment that seemed superfluous to an electorate already realigned behind Tony Blair and which seemed undesirable to his party.

He tried to change his party, but in the end it proved too resistant to change. In the past few weeks, there have been signs that he had given up trying, as the depth of hostility among Liberal Democrats to working with the Labour Government has been increasingly evident. He was forced, for example, to vote against last November's Queen's Speech, which contained virtually nothing with which the Lib Dems disagreed. Mr Ashdown's decision to go is a public declaration of his loss of faith in his own party.

But in the end his failure was to change the Labour Party, which has made its hostility to working with him equally evident. For all his success in establishing his party as the second party of local government, and in sending more MPs to Westminster than at any time since the Liberals were overtaken by the Labour Party earlier this century, he could go no further without achieving a breakthrough in changing the electoral system.

After the Labour landslide removed his bargaining power, his strategy for obtaining proportional representation was fatally flawed. He never really decided whether he wanted to be part of a broad, progressive, liberal coalition - in which case electoral systems are only a means to an end, and changing them was rendered pointless by Mr Blair's redrawing of the contours of the political landscape - or whether PR was desirable as an end in itself.

Could he have played it differently after Mr Blair's unexpectedly decisive victory? Yes. He could have stuck to an independent path, defending liberal principles against the incipient authoritarianism of New Labour, and arguing for a plural political system for its own sake. Whether that would have been any more successful must be doubtful. The failure of Roy Jenkins's compromise PR system to



catch the public imagination was nearly decisive; Mr Blair's shelving of the prospect of a referendum on electoral change before the next election closed the door to the early prospect of breaking the mould. In retrospect, however, Labour's win in May 1997 will be seen as the event that sealed Mr Ashdown's political fate.

The challenge for the Liberal Democrat party is to prove that that election has not sealed its fate, too. In its euphoria at winning 46 MPs, the party may have been temporarily blinded to the significance of what was happening: that Mr Blair was realigning without them. And since then, its opposition to Mr Ashdown's strategy has been based on tribalism. If the party had stood up for what it believed, supporting the Government's budgets and opposing the illiberalism of its policies on education, crime and terrorism, instead of chafing at any element of co-operation, it would be in a stronger position to choose a successor able to build on the impressive platform which Mr Ashdown bequeathes to his ungrateful party.

This historic challenge must not be fudged

THE PUBLICATION of the Government's White Paper on reform of the House of Lords is as welcome as it is overdue. Thankfully, the time when our laws could be made or altered on the basis of an accident of birth will soon come to an end, with the Government appointing a Royal Commission to suggest precisely who should be legislating on our behalf. This Royal Commission will produce its report by the end of the year - an impressive turn of speed for a vehicle which, Harold Wilson once joked, would take minutes and waste years.

However, it is unlikely that the subsequent stages, namely consideration of the proposals by the Government, and a joint committee of the Lords and Commons on implementation, will be undertaken quite so speedily, and there

remains genuine doubt as to whether reform will be anywhere near complete by the time of the next election. Indeed, there is a creeping suspicion that the Government might not wish to see such a distracting issue take centre stage at that time and that it is, in any case, shying from any of the real choices before it.

The judicial role of the Law Lords, the question of disestablishing the Church of England along with the bishops, the place of the new chamber in the broader devolution of the union - all these are missing from the commission's remit.

There is one word above all that cannot be forgotten when it comes to the new upper chamber: democracy. Politicians of all parties may place discreet pressure on the Royal Commission to produce a fudge - a fudge that reduces the power of the new House. The temptation to trim must be resisted by the commission. The new upper house should last for as long as the last one did. To do that it needs democratic legitimacy. It is a historic challenge.

Some thoughts, your Lordship, on the reform of your House

Dear Lord Wakeham,

Congratulations on your appointment to yet another senior position in public service. First the Press Complaints Commission, and then this new Royal Commission on the reformed second chamber. Wow! It's only a shame that we haven't got any large colonies left, so that you can round your career off properly with a nice feathery hat and a medal.

To be honest, your Lordship, my first thought was that appointing someone with your record to oversee radical reform was like putting a pacifist in charge of the Nato intervention force in Kosovo. You've been pretty conservative in the PCC job, haven't you?

But I ought to keep an open mind. At least because I want to serve on the Royal Commission too. No, really, I do. This may seem a bizarre way of bringing my desire to serve my changing country to the PM's attention, but I really cannot see myself going through the endless rounds of networking, lunching, cold-calling and flattery that usually accompany any attempt to break through into the super-quango stratosphere. Some are good at it, some aren't.

There are those who regret the passing of the hereditary peers, just as there is still a League of Empire Loyalists and, I dare say, a shadowy group dedicated to the restoration of the Stuart monarchy (whose scion is probably a Winnipeg acupuncturist). Personally I would be quite prepared to swap all those earls, dukes and whatever for a convocation of hamsters and hedgehogs, if that were the only choice. It seems very sensible and

not at all "control-freaky" to have this interim panel to nominate peers for the period between the guillotining of the aristos and the establishment of a new second chamber, otherwise known as Stage One. My only worry is that if the new Appointments Commission really does respond to public nomination (as is already happening in the drawing up of the honours list), we will end up with 200 hospice volunteers, youth workers and disabled athletes.

But, as you know, m'lud, whatever the obsession with who, the really big question is *what*. What is a second chamber for? And here's where the big worries begin. Your appointment is said to have reflected the desire for cross-party consensus on the question of reform. But insofar as this is to be a consensus between political parties and MPs of different persuasions, then it will also be a consensus that the second chamber should have no powers effectively to challenge the prerogatives of the House of Commons. Lady Jay intimated this much yesterday, when she reassured the world that "whatever the remit of the Royal Commission" MPs would remain supreme.

Lord Wakeham, you've been there. You know that what most members of the Commons would prefer would be a sedate gathering of worthy ex-civil servants, obligingly keeping tabs on all the most boring legislation emanating from Europe, and acting as a sounding-board for whinges from the Welsh Assembly and the Scottish Parliament. With the exception of an enlightened few, MPs would not want



DAVID AARONOVITCH

Whatever the obsession with who, m'lud, the big question is what. What is a second chamber for?

to endow another chamber with substantial rights of veto or delay.

Tony, of course, has his own agenda. Your Excellency. The remit of the Appointments Commission is to consider lay, non-party nominations to the second chamber on the basis of "the special qualities they could bring to the law-making process". And, perhaps, to government. He would like, I suspect, to widen the gene pool from which he and his successors can draw their ministers. Already the whippers are that Lords Falconer and Macdonald (the latter having been ennobled and given ministerial rank on the same day) are among the most effective of New Labour's administrators. Tony may well want to be able, in future, to draw yet more heavily on those who are not career politi-

cians. Given that we do not operate a system of presidential appointments, the PM needs the fig-leaf of a second chamber to achieve this. And he cannot rely on his own party to provide them.

The real problem with the way we are governed lies in the Commons itself, and its relationship to the political parties. The present tribal selection of candidates, under the first-past-the-post system, tends to reward the obsessive and the devious, at the expense of the intelligent and the dynamic. To get elected you must belong to one of the big parties. For them to select you, you must conform to the local orthodoxy of what a good candidate should be like. Although more talented ones slipped under the wire in 1997, it is still the case that only about a tenth of MPs are either bright or curious enough to be decent companions at a Notting Hill dinner party.

When elected, the prime responsibility of those in the majority party is to support their government (of which they all hope to be members), and that of the minority party is to oppose it. It is little wonder that scrutiny (as in the select committee system) invariably stops short of serious embarrassment, or that three-line whips are rarely broken. As a result the Prime Minister, at the head of his whipped majority, exercises almost total, unchallenged powers over appointment, legislation and oversight. Whether or not a PM is a "control freak" is utterly irrelevant. He or she is more completely in control than any American president could ever dream of being. You witnessed all this, Your High-

ness, when you served under Mrs Thatcher. Were you not around for the poll tax? And you must know that one voice in this debate is in danger of going unheard. It is the voice that argues for a substantial second chamber, composed of people who do have the power substantially to delay, alter or block government legislation and appointments. I should like to see a senate whose committees are feared and respected by citizens and public servants in a way that, currently, Commons Select Committees are not. (I exempt those chaired by Gerald Kaufman, who I gather is to help you out. That'll be fun.) And if the second chamber is not to have such powers, then I am reluctant to spend taxpayers' money on it all.

I am not against ideas to link the senate to the devolved bodies in Wales and Scotland (though I suspect that MSPs and MWAs will have better things to do with their time). And I am very much in favour of a number of non-party nominees who have not had to go through the party selection grinder. The Independent Appointments Commission is welcome, though I shall be interested to see who is appointed to make the appointments. But what a modern Britain needs is a mostly elected, legitimate and powerful second chamber, which can assist good government and protect citizens' rights through the exercise of real, not chimerical, power.

That's it. I look forward to hearing from you. By the way, Mondays and Wednesdays are difficult for me. With best wishes, David

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"Though I love being an MP I don't want still to be one at 65."
Paddy Ashdown,
leader of the Liberal Democrats

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

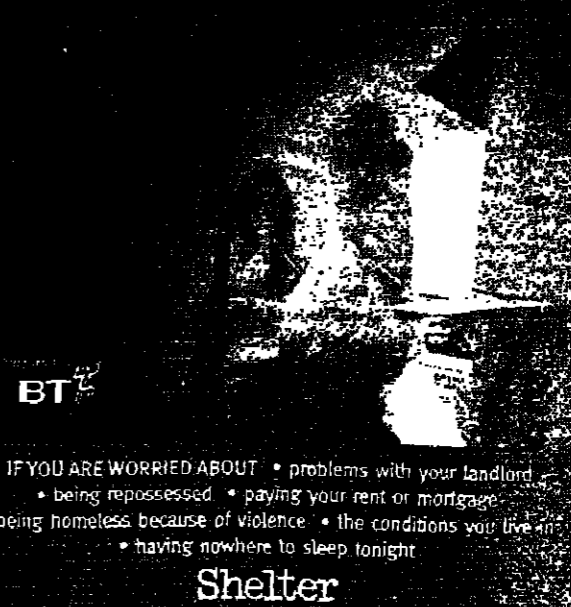
"I may disagree with what you have to say, but I shall defend, to the death, your right to say it."
Voltaire,
French writer and philosopher

Landlord about to kick you out?

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MONITOR

ALL THE NEWS OF THE WORLD
American verdicts on President Clinton's
State of the Union speech

THE PRESIDENT may promise all he wants in new programs but the budget calculations don't add up, and the smart calculus is that future retirees will pay the price.
USA Today

CLINTON WAS able to propose slithering gobs of money on virtually every interest group in sight. For the most part, those recommendations will grate on his principal allies in Congress - the liberals. But the

liberals are in his pocket. Now he needs to solidify support in the center: what better way to do that than with a cash bath? This amounts to jury tampering in the court of public opinion, of course. But this is what Clinton has excelled at for years. Cynicism pays.
New York Post

MANY OF the proposals for education, the environment, crime and military readiness will probably find broad support

in Congress. We hope he also makes a push for campaign finance reform. If he can emerge from the impeachment debate and lead an effort that borrows ideas from the opposition, he

could put a productive stamp on his final two years in office.
New York Times

HELPING CLINTON last night was also the fact that he is

presiding over what may be the most prosperous period in US history. Republicans might as well accept this reality: America won't tolerate his removal. He walked into the House not unlike Daniel entering the lion's den. And like Daniel, he walked out again. The lions were cheering.
Miami Herald

IT MUST be remembered that on the occasion of one of Clinton's previous State of the

Union messages, he declared that the "era of big government is over". Some of the biggest government programs and tax increases in US history followed that blithe baloney. While Clinton's presidency is in deep trouble, the state of the union has not been better in some time. In the coming weeks, the Senate will decide whether Clinton will remain president long enough to advance any part of his sweeping agenda.
Houston Chronicle

PANDORA

A RECENT profile of the Cabinet enforcer Jack Cunningham appearing in a parliamentary journal is significant for the things it leaves out. In a two-page article Cunningham tantalises the reader with such revelations as: "I left Jarrow after a very stimulating, thought-provoking few years. It was a very radical environment. The excellent head of the mathematics department was a lifelong communist. After studies I played lots of football and tennis." However, despite such exhilarating stuff, Cunningham omits to mention his father's imprisonment for his involvement in the Foulson graft scandal that rocked local government in the Seventies, far more intriguing than any tennis match. Daisy Sampson, political correspondent of *The House Magazine*, explained to Pandora that: "It is a live face-to-face interview. I can't say what was discussed but if people don't want to talk about something then there is nothing you can do." Luckily for Jack the interview predated the recent stories about his "champagne" lifestyle abroad, thus avoiding more tricky questions.

WAS PADDY Ashdown's resignation written in the stars? The retiring Lib Dem leader was pictured signing a "living will" on the front cover of this month's *VES News*, the campaign journal for the Voluntary Euthanasia Society. A "living will" enables the bearer to decline life-sustaining treatment which would prolong his or her existence unnecessarily. Did Paddy have his own political career in mind when he signed up?

IF CELEBRATIONS for the millennium turn nasty will there be sufficient presence from the security forces to avert chaos? In the US steps have already been taken to tackle this problem, with Washington state announcing that 2,000 armed National Guardsmen and women will be on duty on and after 31 December 1999. Meanwhile, in the UK the Association of Chief Police Officers' Millennium Co-ordinating Committee told Pandora: "If the military are to assist it would most likely be in their role of offering aid to the civil community following an event or accident of an exceptional nature."

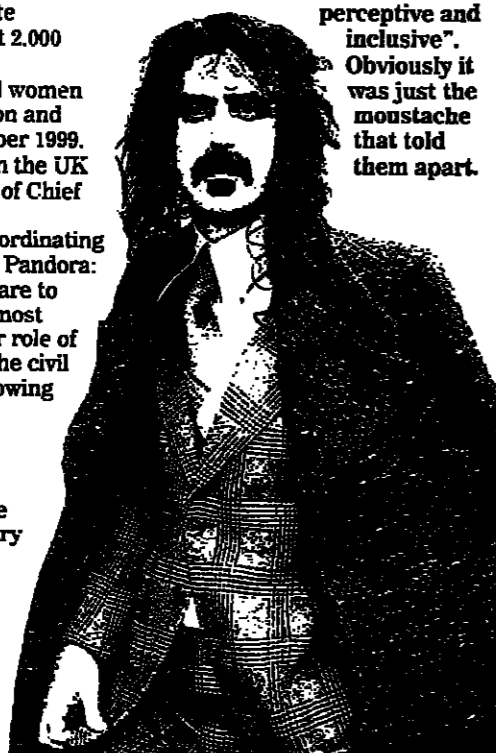
The response from the Ministry of Defence was rather blunter: "If support is required we have the capability to assist."

POLITICIANS ASPIRING to be mayor of London may want to take note of the Spanish factor. A real vote-winning idea of buying the electorate birthday presents has been hit upon by Julio Fernandez, mayor of a small town near Madrid. Gifts including slippers and bicycle pumps are being doled out at the rate of a dozen a day to the town's 5,000 inhabitants. A barber who received the slippers complained: "It seems he has started his election campaign early. If he paid for the gifts himself it would be all right, but to do it with public money is immoral." Would such treats for the electorate be considered by mayoral hopefuls such as Ken Livingstone and Jeffrey Archer? If the worst came to the worst for Archer he could always give away free copies of his books. Then again, the idea is to win votes not lose them.

MICHAEL CAINE has been dissecting his acting style. The British screen actor, who is mooted as an Oscar nominee for his role in *Little Voice*, recently told the US columnist Liz Smith that: "I am an unsuitable let-it-all-hang-out performer. I call it parachute acting. I jump, I scream and hope the damn chute opens." Surely, Caine needs a stunt double?

MANY CELEBRITY endorsements have been bestowed on President Clinton but few can have been as welcome as that from Gail Zappa, widow of rock's legendary wild man, Frank Zappa (pictured). When Zappa died in 1993 both Clinton and Vice-President Gore sent Gail their condolences. Now one of the Democrats' top donors, Mrs Zappa recently told the *Washington Times* that the President's misdemeanours don't bother her and that Clinton "reminded me of Frank, in that he was really smart and

perceptive and inclusive". Obviously it was just the moustache that told them apart.



There's no glory in acting drunk

THE HORROR! The horror! More drunken actors! How come I never really noticed it before? I took it for granted, like the smell of the stuff they use to glue backcloths, which gives that pungent aroma that stays in your memory. It's part of the trade, par for the course...

On tour, actors gather round one table endlessly boozing, boring themselves into a numb zone. Most know when to stop, but there is always the one for whom booze acts as an incendiary device blowing part of his brain up. He fixes you with his newly acquired freedom, rumy eyes pinning you in an accusing stare for being so stiff, reserved or sober. You feel guilty for not sharing this abandoned joy, his uninhibited release. Curiously, we other actors are involuntarily forced into a kind of submission, admiring his outrageous antics. His idiotic boldness we see as courage. We feel lesser as he grows bigger.

I was sucked into it as a young actor when the pub did nothing but sell booze, and maybe a few crisps to soak up the river of beer. We would dash desperately to the pub after the show, terrified lest we should miss our alcoholic reward. Like those newborn turtles racing for the sea, we raced to the pub. Conditioned thus to desperation, we got wasted



STEVEN BERKOFF

Acting is about the only profession where you can perform the work pissed out of your mind

when abroad, carried into hotels by sympathetic colleagues, lifted on to planes after international festivals. Didn't even Shakespeare know about this? Hamlet says: "They clepe us drunkards and with swinish phrase soil our addition..." Maybe we were always so inclined.

We can get wrecked, since the acting profession is about the only job, apart from pop and rock perhaps, where you can perform the work pissed out of your mind. With memorising and repetition, once the words have sunk into your brain no

amount of alcohol can budge them. The become like a tattoo that you can't remove.

So, paradoxically, for acting you need great skill to create the role and then, once it's airborne, it seems to propel itself under its own volition. A dynamic company that included many disciplines, a demanding physical theatre, would not be able to tolerate indulgence; nor could the boozy actor endure the pace. Every actor has a story about someone who has gone on stage blind drunk. We admire the gall, interpreting it as a kind of wildrogishness. The great 19th-century actor Edmund Kean could go on stage after copious amounts of brandy because he kept the same plays in his repertoire for years - obviously wisely so.

Booze is taken for granted, almost like the rum station for sailors. I have to have a drink after a show as if to replace something, or even keep that sense of freedom going; however, I can't feel comfortable with the idea that the liver, kidney and brain are invincible.

In the Sixties there was a strong reaction to solid, heavy theatre when young, idealistic groups attempted to radicalise plot naturalism. The criterion for joining such companies was a radical attitude to-

wards theatre, and a strong physical awareness. Rehearsals were most often commenced after an arduous warm-up - both vocal and physical - and much of the rehearsal discoveries came from the warm-ups themselves.

We were liberating ourselves and poured scorn on those "real" actors who propped up the bar at the Salisbury pub while, proudly, we felt ourselves to be pioneers of the new movement. However, it was still the booze-and-fags brigade who were getting highly paid TV work while we contented ourselves with touring the outer reaches of Europe winning accolades unknown to anyone.

But in those heady days there was always one actor, recruited from the "straight" theatre, who wasn't happy unless he was sliding in his own vomit, and it was the one who managed somehow to sour the group: the boozier. There was always someone in each production who had a problem with his intake, especially when he was loosened from family and ties of England and could let himself go... abroad.

Later, after the idealistic Sixties and Seventies, life continued much as it had before. I formed groups and again toured the outer regions of Europe, and again there would

always be one or two who would enjoy a toot until they collapsed. The normal drinkers, curiously, thought of themselves as the "wets", since they felt dull for not poisoning their brains each night. I got used to the sour smell, the stinking breath, the lachrymose confessions.

That's why I wanted to form a company where we would continue to study, go to the gym and not end up as wine-tasters. The problem seems endemic in the theatre, and even worse on film.

I have no great wish to smile and tolerate the malfunctioning of an actor, and watch as the glory we have won so arduously and painstakingly is covered in grime when our hosts stare at us in disbelief. However, that is rare; our actors are usually way above the average.

Years ago, we had a first-class company but there was one actor we almost had to carry from town to town. He was on loan from a large subsidised company and we put it down to his previous under-usage that had demoralised him. Perhaps the material maketh the man. The junk movie and crap TV, the simplistic staging that makes little demands. Who knows or cares?

But one day I should like to see a company of actors with the dedication of athletes.

The double standards that pass for Western diplomacy

ASI stepped out of the Radio 4 *Today* programme studio recently, after arguing with Malcolm Rifkind about how Muslims in this country are excluded from the corridors of power, a slightly edgy researcher told me that someone on the phone was screaming for my blood.

Was he a Christian terrorist, I immediately wondered? Absurd. Depraved people are always threatening to do away with loudmouths like me (most are white, angry, poisonously racist and anti-Muslim), and sometimes I get worried enough to put a bucket of water under the letterbox before going to bed. But just because there are white loonies abroad, not all white people can stand accused.

When such things happen the other way round, however, and a Muslim is involved, then, as predictably as rain on a summer party Sunday, all of us Muslims are put on trial. For a couple of days we do the rounds, being questioned by bad-tempered men in the media about Muslims behaving madly. The steps are well practised. Militant Muslims such as Abu Hamza, the infamous imam of the Finsbury Park mosque who held a press conference yesterday to condemn their host country, cry Jihad and the end of the West. The media laps up the drops of imagined blood. Moderates then rush in to proclaim how wonderfully peaceful Islam is (instead of being honest enough to say that it should be, but is manifestly not in too many parts of the world - and in pockets here in Britain), or theorise about why some of our young men are so angry and drawn to extremist politics. Politicians say apocryphal things about their good Muslim con-



YASMIN ALIBHAI-BROWN

How long will we carry on sending out Eton-educated Cuthberts as our ambassadors?

stituents, and fierce things about militants and Saddam Hussein. The dance macabre ends and we all get back into our boxes.

Only this time, with Yemen, it is so horribly complicated that we are all stumbling to keep upright. And the inadequacy of analysis by the media, politicians and Muslims is being shown up. It seems extraordinary that not one politician I have heard has shown the courage to make the links between the kidnappings, the recent bombing of Iraq, Israeli intransigence, and now Kosovo. The obvious influence wielded by the terrifying Captain Hook in Finsbury Park mosque is only enhanced by the political failure.

Terrorism of the heart grows when you feel you are being lied to, or when your justified rage is being treated with indifference. There is much talk in New Labour circles of joined-up government, yet, when it comes to crises such as the Yemen,

the Government seems unable to think about the relationship between global and domestic policies.

Even the most self-critical Muslims today have no doubts about the double standards that operate in what passes for sophisticated Western diplomacy. We are not so stupid that we can't see how past Western decisions have created the monsters that now threaten so much of what we hold dear. The way we are reacting is also bound up with the way we feel we are being disregarded.

Yemen has also revealed other weaknesses in the way we operate. The five detained men are British. They are people of this island, not spooky Martians stalking it. There can be little doubt that there was a difference - as the families of the men complained - between the official responses to the white victims of kidnapping and the brown men held for so long without charges.

It was only really when Monica Davis, the white wife of one of the men, started speaking out, that the case began to get attention. We got a national frenzy over Louise Woodward, and the nurses in Saudi Arabia, but nothing has been done about Krishna Maharaj, a British Asian businessman who has been on death row in Florida for 10 years for murders of which many believe he is innocent. Our foreign policy is still based on the idea of them and us.

Where are the policy-makers with imagination to see that this image is dangerously out of date? How long are we going to carry on sending out Eton-educated Cuthberts who should instead be redeployed as guides in the Victoria & Albert museum? I shudder to think what an imperial leftover like Sir David Gore-



Celebrating Eid at a mosque

Dylan Martinez/Reuters

Booth has been doing as our High Commissioner in India.

Why don't we have Muslim or Hindu British ambassadors to go into tetchy countries and do the job that now needs to be done? I could send the Foreign Office a list of urbane, educated, deeply attractive men and women, who could serve this country and change our presence in the world. In the Seventies the US used Andrew Young as a roving ambassador in Africa with beneficial results.

But it is not only the political elite that needs to re-educate itself. We Muslims do, too. I reject the myth that we are all simple, put-upon, misunderstood people, or that even the most appalling Islamic country must be excused to prevent Western hegemony. Our mosques are, on the whole, places of prayer. Some are more than that. One or two are involved in brainwashing the young.

All good Muslims should stand up and denounce these places, and support government action to control and punish the people responsible. Other mosques are creating terrible unhappiness within families by insisting on the coercion of young women and men. All these places have imams who are sponsored by countries such as Saudi Arabia.

British Muslims should fight to have these people ejected and deported. We need imams who are of the West and who can guide our young through the complexities of what it means to be a British Muslim; how you keep your identity and fight against Islamophobia, but also shed those aspects of cultural life that violate human rights, and not resist many modern ideas that are essential in the world to come. If we don't take responsibility and change our communities, what right do we have to complain?

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You have rarely had it so good

MR SPEAKER, Mr Vice President, members of the 105th Congress, distinguished guests and my fellow Americans. For 208 years, it has been the president's duty to report to you on the state of the union. Because of the hard work and high purpose of the American people, these are good times for America. Our leadership in the world is unrivalled.

Ladies and gentlemen, the state of our union is strong. However, with barely 700 days left in the 20th century, this is not a time to rest.

It is a time to build - to build the America that is within reach. An America where everybody has a chance to get ahead with hard work, where every citizen can live in a safe community, where families are strong, where schools are good and where all our young people can go on to college.

An America where our scientists find cures for diseases from diabetes to Alzheimer's to AIDS.

An America where every child can stretch a hand across a keyboard and reach every book ever written, every painting ever painted, every sym-

phony ever composed. An America which leads the world to new heights of peace and prosperity. This is the America we have begun to build.

We are moving steadily towards an even stronger America in the 21st century, an America that offers opportunity, a society rooted in responsibility and a nation that lives as a community.

Americans in this chamber and across our nation have pursued a new strategy for prosperity: fiscal discipline to cut interest rates and spur growth. Investments in education and skills and science and technology and transportation to prepare our people for the new economy. New markets for American products and American workers.

For three decades, six presidents have come before you to warn of the damage deficits pose to our nation. Tonight I come before you to announce that the federal deficit, once so incomprehensibly large that it had 11 zeros, will be simply zero. I will submit to Congress for 1999 the first balanced budget in 30 years.

Here's the really good news: if we maintain our resolve, we

PODIUM
BILL CLINTON
From the State of the Union address delivered by the President to the United States Congress

will produce balanced budgets as far as the eye can see.

Let us say - let us say to all Americans watching tonight - whether you're 70 or 50 or whether you have just started paying into the system - social security will be there when you need it.

I also want to say that all the American people who are watching us tonight should be invited to join in this discussion. In facing these issues squarely,

In forming a true consensus on how we should proceed. We will start by conducting non-partisan forums in every region of the country.

And I hope that law-makers of both parties will participate. Last year, at this podium, I said that education has to be our highest priority. I laid out a 10-point plan to move us forward and urged all of us to let politics stop at the schoolhouse door.

Since then, this Congress, across party lines, and the American people have responded in the most important year for education in a generation.

I have something to say to every family listening to us tonight. Your children can go on to college. If you know a child from a poor family, tell her not to give up. She can go on to college. If you know a young couple struggling with bills, worried they won't be able to send their children to college, tell them not to give up - their children can go on to college.

If you know somebody who's caught in a dead-end job and afraid he can't afford the classes necessary to get better jobs for the rest of his life, tell

him not to give up - he can go on to college.

Because of the things that have been done, we can make college as universal in the 21st century as high school is today. And, my friends, that will change the face and the future of America.

We have opened wide the doors of the world's best system of higher education. Now we must make our public elementary and secondary schools the world's best.

A strong nation rests on the rock of responsibility. A society rooted in responsibility must first promote the value of work, not welfare. We can be proud that, after decades of finger-pointing and failure, together we ended the old welfare system. And we're now replacing welfare checks with paychecks. Child care is the next frontier we must face to enable people to succeed.

We must work together, learn together, live together, serve together. On the forge of common enterprise, Americans of all backgrounds can hammer out a common identity. God bless you and God bless the United States.

A battle too far for Paddy



SEAN O'GRADY
Those of us working for him found him difficult to keep up with, physically and intellectually

PADDY ASHDOWN has been a very impatient man. Not for nothing was one of his more enduring nicknames "Tigger". And typically Paddy is as fond of his jogging as most politicians are of life's softer pleasures. As a result, those of us who worked for him found him extremely difficult to keep up with, physically and intellectually. Indeed, his liking for the Somerset countryside, and a brisk walk as we discussed the challenges facing the party, ruined at least one pair of perfectly good shoes of mine. But as he looks forward to an easier pace of life, he can reflect that he lived up to almost all of the political challenges placed in his path, and brought himself and his party closer to power than any previous leader since Lloyd George, is more than sufficient to secure his place in history. The achievement of influence through the Joint Cabinet committee with the Government on first constitutional, and later foreign affairs, was something that his immediate predecessors could only dream about.

That Paddy is retiring because he feels he has achieved all he can for his party is sad, but to me, not so startling. Ten years is probably enough, as David Steel suggested in an article for this paper to mark Paddy's decade as leader. Although I only worked with him for a very short time, I quickly found that Paddy Ashdown was a man who would always have to have something to run for. I think that he has run out of things to run for, despite his recent close personal relationship with Tony Blair. Having a project to run at was what made him tick, politically.

When he was a soldier he had battles to fight and wars to win. He tells a good tale about some of these. He wandered into politics - convinced, he always said, by an odd little Liberal man in an anorak who turned up on his doorstep in 1971 and who wanted to talk to him about "community politics". Not his type, you would think, but he soon got used to the men in sandals, and his earlier flirtation with the Labour Party was finally extinguished. His next aim was to secure a seat and win it. He turned up in Yeovil, partly through family connections of his wife Jane's, and after a pot at it in 1979, went on to win in 1983, securing the largest swing against the Conservative Party in the West Country, with some Liberal tradition. But the scale of the turnaround that Paddy achieved was down to a certain force of personality. After he became leader he inherited a party that couldn't even decide on its own name ("Democrats" was his own preference, one of the few mistakes, he joked, that he was ashamed to own up to).

Politically his first task - another thing to run for - was to finish off the other two political minnows he found himself in competition with. Despite the occasional overture, Dr David Owen's "continuing SDP",

little more than a fan club for the Doc, proved for a short while an effective and irritating distraction. Trickier to deal with were the Greens, who were in fact grabbing part of the old Liberal appeal to environmentalism. They too were seen off. The 1992 election was a staging post, a chance to prove that the party could, more or less, hold its own, which it did. Another project completed.

But the political challenge which most tested Ashdown, and which he tried turning to his advantage, was in the shape of that new kid on the block Tony Blair, who became Labour leader in 1994.

Blair challenged Paddy's monopoly for freshness and energy when he became Labour leader in 1994. Coming to terms with a "younger man" was not going to be easy. More significant though, was the political sublimation of Blair. Rightly or wrongly, Paddy came to the view that Blair was, in fact, "one of us". That is that Blair, in his undeological, pragmatic, progressive, modernising way was in fact a Liberal, albeit in the loosest sense of the word. Or at least that he had the potential so to become. It was a judgement that many in his own party would find difficult to accept. The thing that Paddy Ashdown began to run for now was power. Having weaned his party off "equidistance" between Labour and the Tories, he began running for office. The convergence between the two parties, halting and untidy, might accommodate that ambition.

It might have been possible, say in a hung parliament or some other politically surprising situation, to have hoped realistically for a place in government. This would be on principle, as he always said to do something rather than be something. For whatever reason, such a moment has now, probably, passed (although constitutionalists will point out that you can be a minister and not leader of the Lib Dems). True, the Cabinet Committee offered much opportunity for influence. But the essential task - of setting it up and making it work - is done.

My guess is that as he yomped with his beloved pet mongrel, Luke, around the hills near his home he reflected on what the next few

years offered him, and found less than usual to run for. Paddy sometimes confided that he found too much of his time occupied by fairly pointless ritual, a piece of constitutional wallpaper, turning up to things for reasons of protocol. If he had ever made it to the Foreign Office, he would have found such duties irksome. Another four or five years as leader of the Lib Dems, struggling for attention, often ignored, and without the prospect of power, it all rather palled.

In many ways Paddy Ashdown will play Neil Kinnock to his successor's Tony Blair. In other words he will have done much, even most, of the hard work on changing his party, but will be unable to reap the final reward. Most significant, he will not be around to see the dream realised. When it does come, we will witness what Paddy always glorified as "the new politics". He will bequeath to his successor an impressive legacy (although not one without its debts and problems). He has done an enormous amount to achieve the big thing he was running for - the historic reconciliation between the progressive parties of the "centre-left". But he read too much, perhaps, into Tony Blair's liberalism, which is not as thoroughgoing or unequivocal as he thought. It is a little wishful, or possibly ironic, to place Blair in a line with Gladstone, Lloyd George or Keynes. He also, if this does not sound too bizarre, placed a little too much faith in the intentions of one man, even if he is the Prime Minister. It was apparent to me that not everyone in Government was as enthusiastic about our habit of working together as their leader was. Many had rather tribal instincts.

Paddy will miss the Party. He genuinely (and in stark contrast to Lord Steel) retained a sympathy with the party's grass roots that few other political leaders could boast after 10 years at the top. His party was sometimes suspicious of him but always had that nagging doubt that Paddy had been right before. He did have strategic sense. He loved policy.

Paddy will not, however, miss the House of Commons. He did not choose parliamentarians, on the whole, for his friends and was not the "clubbable" type. He had little time for the traditions and flummery that seem to enchant so many others. I suspect he also felt bad about the deliberate disrespect MPs showed at Prime Minister's Questions, but he certainly did not show it.

Paddy would have made an ideal Foreign or Defence minister, his background and knowledge perfectly suited to the task. Whether Paddy and Jane would relish taking up the life abroad again is a more moot point. At all events, he will spend more time with his family and may even write his memoirs. They will be an exciting tale.

The author was head of Paddy Ashdown's office, 1997-1998



Paddy Ashdown relaxes in the Leader's office after another strategy session

Glynn Griffiths

RIGHT OF REPLY

MARK BYFORD



The chief executive of the BBC World Service responds to claims that the service is being damaged by cuts

RECENT PRESS reports about cuts in BBC World Service funding have been misleading and misinformed.

Far from the "piecemeal destruction" of the BBC World Service alleged in your report ("Foolish BBC accused of destroying World Service", 19 January), our three-year plan is focusing on developing the World Service with new investments.

Last year, World Service put in a bid for additional funding, and was awarded an extra £44m from the Foreign Office phased over the next three years - £30m for programmes and services and £14m to support new capital investments.

We work in a rapidly changing media environment where an increasing number of our listeners are moving away from short-wave radio to FM and the Internet. It is essential that we respond to this challenge with a forward-looking programme of investment, backed up by efficiencies and some reorganisation.

We have broadcast on short wave for more than 60 years, and will continue to do so in the future. But it is going to be complemented increasingly by FM. The Internet offers exciting new opportunities too, as a global interactive medium.

Discussions about our three-year plan are still continuing with the Foreign Office, but I hope to announce full and accurate details soon.

The BBC is totally committed to the World Service and its global mission.

In a period of dynamic change, we are determined to secure for the long term our reputation as the world's best known and most respected voice in international broadcasting. At the same time, I assure you the World Service will safeguard its inherent values of accuracy, impartiality and objectivity. These principles are non-negotiable in any age.

Can you imagine yourself rich?

MAYBE IT is because money is such an insubstantial thing that most of us have a hard time getting enough of it. After all, the notes and coins in our pockets - themselves purely symbolic - form only a tiny portion of the money in circulation. Most of it consists of electronic impulses. Indeed, so unreal is modern money that credit card companies in the US have issued plastic to a dog, according to one of the cheery anecdotes in this book.

As a result of the ease with which money can be created, it can also be democratised. *Funny Money* is a grass-roots manifesto. It brings new meaning to the injunction to go out and make some money. After all, airlines do just that when they issue air miles, and stores do it when they issue loyalty points. As do communities when they launch what are known in this country as local exchange trading



THURSDAY BOOK

FUNNY MONEY: IN SEARCH OF ALTERNATIVE CASH
BY DAVID BOYLE. HARPERCOLLINS. £14.99

schemes (Lets) and in the US as "time dollars" schemes.

The latter are alternative, notional currencies issued in return for the time or effort of scheme members. There are several variants, but basically the scheme registers work done for other members in the form of credits, and members can draw on their saved credits to buy services in return. Most systems are run by an organiser with a personal computer.

Edgar Cahn, the American forefather of the hundreds of Lets

schemes now in operation in the UK, noted that everybody is equal in their inheritance of time. Fancy lawyers can command a high dollar price for their time. Unemployed single mothers cannot, but through a time dollars scheme can draw value from their time and effort.

We all do this informally when we take part in babysitting circles or do favours for neighbours and family in the unspoken give-and-take of social life. The schemes backed by David Boyle and campaigners such as the New Economics Foundation do it more formally, as a means of enriching some of the poorest and most excluded members of society.

Conventional economists tend to be a bit stuffy about alternative-money schemes. Parts of this book will confirm the hard-headed sceptic in his view that the idea is a bit flaky. For example, in a concluding list of advice, Mr Boyle urges us to "create wealth... by imagining it, visualising it - or just by being more generous with it. Though to do so you have to let go of the deadwood emotions of the past and embrace the future with some enthusiasm, which is sometimes difficult when you are grindingly poor".

Certainly, nobody who is conventionally wealthy got that way by such a New Age approach. Self-made man is, on the contrary, typically a rather stingy and obsessive beast, a workaholic and the last person to buy a round down the pub. However, for the merely comfortable, there is a lot of good sense in advice that can be boiled down to keeping a sense of perspective

112.97	UBS AG WI
1.1697	RABOBANK
132.14	Reuters
132.21	UBS AG WI

Most modern money is just a series of electronic impulses Kyodo/AP

about money. It is the same in the end as the basic precept that money and value can differ. Different values can have their own currency.

The catch is that we all need a certain amount of conventional money to buy conventional goodies. We all need some global electronic money to be part of the world economy, as well as some homespun value to be rooted in our local economy. Mr Boyle's last piece of advice - "don't shop" - is, at least for flighty people such as me, a serious turn-off. It's a bit of the joyless puritanism about consumerism to which so many alternative and green thinkers are prone.

This is why "downshifting" is so deeply unappealing and depressing an alternative. Its guru, Amy Dacyczyn, has a three-year system of rotation to make her cheap sneakers last. This is a lot weirder than visualising money. It is the counsel of defeat, whereas creating a new currency is a counter-attack. There are signs that the money

establishment is taking alternative electronic currencies a bit more seriously. Bernard Lietaer, who once worked in Belgium's central bank, is one convert trying to persuade bankers and politicians that, if they don't watch out, a whole new parallel economy will have emerged.

And, after all, money is power. As Mr Boyle reminds us, Virginia and Maryland started minting their own currencies just ahead of the American Revolution. Alternative currencies are a potent means for the poor and comfortably off alike to use free markets and new technology - so often seen as the weapons of the haves against the have-nots - in order to break the monopoly of conventional money. The world in which the dollar and euro are slugging it out for global dominance - in cyberspace, through the computers of the big investment banks - is ripe for an outbreak of monetary democracy.

DIANE COYLE

THURSDAY POEM

HARLEM
BY LANGSTON HUGHES

What happens to a dream deferred?

Does it dry up
like a raisin in the sun?

Or fester like a sore -
And then run?

Does it stink like rotten meat?
Or crust and sugar over -
like a syrupy sweet?

Maybe it just sags
like a heavy load.

Or does it explode?

Our poems today and tomorrow come from the 'Selected Poems' of Langston Hughes, reissued next week by Serpent's Tail (£7.99)



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Alternatively, we'll pay for road or rail travel (return), and even

emergency hotel accommodation overnight for you and all your passengers. Beat that!

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Date of renewal ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3
JN21A01

**Yves
Jouffa**

JOHN KENNEDY
van Francescato, rugby player:
born Treviso, Italy 10 February 1967;
died Treviso 18 January 1999.

The
Fr

THE COVER PAGE

So wrote Frank Key
in 1925. According to

the wisdom of the people
and the people of the world
the people of the world
the people of the world

10-10-68

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the 1990s, the number of people in the world who are undernourished has declined from 760 million to 600 million. The number of people who are malnourished has declined from 1.1 billion to 800 million. The number of people who are obese has increased from 100 million to 300 million. The number of people who are overweight has increased from 100 million to 300 million. The number of people who are obese and overweight has increased from 100 million to 300 million. The number of people who are obese and overweight has increased from 100 million to 300 million.

^a The number of subjects who were included in each group was 10.

[illegible][illegible]

the 1990s, the number of people in the United States who are 65 years of age or older has increased by 50% (U.S. Census Bureau, 1997). The number of people aged 65 and older is projected to increase to 20% of the total population by the year 2020 (U.S. Census Bureau, 1997). The increase in the number of people aged 65 and older has led to an increase in the number of people who are dependent on others for their care. This has led to a need for more long-term care facilities, such as nursing homes and assisted living facilities. The number of people in long-term care facilities has increased by 50% since 1980 (U.S. Census Bureau, 1997). The increase in the number of people in long-term care facilities has led to a need for more research on the needs of people in long-term care facilities. This research is needed to help improve the quality of care for people in long-term care facilities.

the 1990s, the number of people in the United States who are 65 years of age and older has increased by 50% (U.S. Census Bureau, 1997). The number of people aged 65 and older is projected to increase to 20% of the total population by the year 2020 (U.S. Census Bureau, 1997). The increase in the number of people aged 65 and older is expected to be the largest increase in any age group in the United States (U.S. Census Bureau, 1997). The increase in the number of people aged 65 and older is expected to be the largest increase in any age group in the United States (U.S. Census Bureau, 1997).

the 1990s, the number of people in the world who are illiterate has increased from 1.2 billion to 1.5 billion. The number of illiterate people in the world is projected to reach 1.7 billion by the year 2015. The number of illiterate people in the world is projected to reach 1.7 billion by the year 2015.

1. *Chlorophyll *a** was determined by the method of Arar and Collins (1971).

— 100 —

1. The first step is to identify the problem.

[illegible]

1. The first step is to identify the problem or question that needs to be answered. This involves understanding the context and the specific requirements of the task.

[illegible]

• REPORT

MARRIAGE & DEATH

BIRTHS
SHAPIRO 07 18 1971

DEATHS

Suddenly, Marc, aged 51, Mr. Mc-
beloved husband of Hermion
and adored father of Alexis
and Anna. Family funeral
celebrated.

National Gallery: Carol
Plazzotta. "Portraits (iii):
Stubbs. Whistlejacket"

Reputation: Rodin and G
John", 1pm.

(24)

100

Yves
Jouffa

The Right Rev Frank West



West in 1962, the year he was consecrated Bishop of Taunton UPP

"THE COUNTRY parson must be a student of human nature, well aware of all its complexities. He must be gifted with humour, understanding, and patience." So wrote Frank West in 1960, when he was Archdeacon of Newark, in his book *The Country Parish Today and Tomorrow*. Now, almost 40 years later, the wisdom which he packed into that influential book is as relevant as ever. He quoted Bishop Ken in support of the strict discipline of reciting the daily office in the church. He asserted that the primary duty of a parish priest is to be the intercessor on behalf of the people. All his wisdom, and much more, made the book a classic.

There was soon a demand for a second edition, which appeared four years later. This attempted to look further into the future and to predict likely patterns of the church's ministry. To some extent, events may have overtaken his predictions; but on the whole they have been justified. He welcomed A.C. Smith's *The South Ormsby Experiment* in a review, calling it "the most significant essay in pastoral reorganisation since the war".

West was well equipped to write the book because he was a parish priest at heart. For the first eight years of his time as an archdeacon he was also the incumbent of a country parish in Nottinghamshire (Upton, followed by East Retford) until it was considered that the work of an archdeacon was too demanding to allow the double task; but he gave up his parish with real regret.

During this period, he found time to write three more books: *Rude Forefathers, the story of an English Village, 1600-1666* (1949); *The Great North Road in Nottinghamshire* (1956); and *Sparrows of the Spirit* (1957), which gave fascinating glimpses into the life and work of country parish priests in Nottinghamshire from 1583 to 1911. This last book, full of lively touches, was the result of considerable research.

The success of these writings can be traced back to West's time at Magdalene College, Cambridge, where he read History and Theology. He enjoyed historical research, but that quest was opened by a solid grounding in theology, which provided the Christian element and was linked to his intensely pastoral outlook. An example of his pastoral insight can be found in his book on the country parish: "Visiting is not out of date. Behind the practice there lies a solid theological principle - nothing

less than the Incarnation itself. In the visit of the parson the people recognise the outward and visible sign of the Church's care for them as individuals." He saw a sacramental principle underlying the practice of visiting.

West was born in St Albans in 1909. After attending Berkhamsted School, he went to Cambridge as an exhibitioner. He went to Ridley Hall Theological College, to which he returned as Chaplain after a curacy in Leeds.

His appointment as Vicar of Starbeck, near Harrogate, from 1938, was interrupted by the Second World War. He served with distinction as a Chaplain to the Forces from 1939 to 1946. In France he was wounded and saw his batman killed. He returned to active service in North Africa, Italy and South East Asia, where he was mentioned in dispatches. This period of his life taught him much

'Visiting is not out of date. Behind the practice lies a solid theological principle - nothing less than the Incarnation itself'

about human nature and about ministering to the spiritual needs of all types of people. The experience affected his subsequent ministry in civilian life.

After the war he was appointed Director of Service Ordination Candidates. The work involved interviewing countless men who offered themselves for ordination on being demobilised.

After 15 years as Archdeacon of Newark (1947-62), West was consecrated Bishop of Taunton. As suffragan to the Bishop of Bath and Wells, he found himself in the varied countryside of Somerset. It was the perfect setting for his rural interests, especially as he was able to combine the work with being a parish priest again. He and his family lived in the Old Rectory at Dinder, near Wells; and at the cathedral he enjoyed being a member of the Chapter as Prebendary of Dinder. After nine years, he again gave up his parish owing to an in-

creasing workload; but he did so with extreme reluctance. In the village he was greatly popular. He visited regularly, established a notable Parish Communion service on Sundays, and re-ordered the furnishings of the medieval church in a simple and dignified way.

As suffragan bishop, many responsibilities came his way. One which he took very seriously was the direction of post-ordination training in the diocese. He held frequent meetings and discussions in his home.

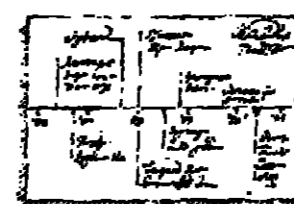
West retired in 1977 to live in Aldbourne, near Marlborough. He developed a special ministry to schools, where his understanding of young people was greatly valued. He remained young in heart, and his warmth and humanity made him many friends. In 1980 he published a biography of E.R. Barry, Bishop of Southwell, under whom he had served as archdeacon. He produced his

sixth and final book in 1987, *The Story of a Wiltshire Country Church*.

As he faced increasing infirmity, his wife Beryl remained faithfully at his side, as she had done throughout their happy marriage of more than 50 years.

PATRICK MITCHELL

Francis Horner West, priest: born St Albans, Hertfordshire 9 January 1909; ordained deacon 1933, priest 1934; Curate, St Agnes, Leeds 1933-36; Chaplain, Ridley Hall, Cambridge 1936-38; Vicar of Starbeck 1938-42; Director of Service Ordination Candidates 1946-47; Vicar of Upton 1947-51; Archdeacon of Newark 1951-55; Bishop Suffragan of Taunton 1955-77; Prebendary of Wells 1957-77; Rector of Dinder, Somerset 1962-71; married 1947 Beryl Renwick (one son, one daughter); died Marlborough, Wiltshire 2 January 1999.



HISTORICAL NOTES

MELISSA BENN

From personal tragedy to new ways of living

MOTHERHOOD is a theme that has, unsurprisingly, been tackled by some of the great feminists of the post-Enlightenment era. Several of these writers, such as Simone de Beauvoir and Germaine Greer, have written about the topic without being mothers themselves. This has lent their arguments an appealing sweep and didacticism but it has also placed more emphasis on rationality and free will than many mothers feel themselves to possess in real life.

Other feminists have tackled the theme as a direct result of bearing and rearing children. Perhaps the greatest modern text on motherhood is Adrienne Rich's *Of Woman Born: Motherhood as Experience and Institution* (1977). This work spoke directly to a generation of highly-educated, post-war women, many of whom found themselves plunged, from their early twenties, into sole care of home and children. Rich addressed the painful and deep ambivalence that so many women feel in relation to their own offspring.

The conflict between experience and polemic can be traced back to the work of one of the first feminist agitators of the modern era, Mary Wollstonecraft, who published her "Vindication of the Rights of Woman" in 1792. With its spirited arguments for women's economic and professional freedom, this lengthy pamphlet has been

almost continually discussed since its first appearance.

Wollstonecraft was not a mother when she wrote it, although it touches often on the theme of motherhood. Rearing a family, she argued, was a perfectly proper occupation for a woman, unlike taking an unhealthy interest in one's appearance, but it must be undertaken in a spirit of self-reliance. "To be a good mother, a woman must have sense and that independence of mind which few women possess who are taught to depend entirely on their husbands."

It has been suggested that Wollstonecraft's sharp observations may have dated from her experience as a governess in Ireland to the children of a large Anglo-Irish aristocratic clan, the Kingsboroughs. Wollstonecraft's jealousy of both her employer's fecundity and yet continuing sexual allure obviously informed some of the biting tone of a "Vindication". One of the saddest aspects of Mary Wollstonecraft's life is how profoundly she was changed by her personal experience of love and motherhood. Two years after the publication of a "Vindication" she gave birth to a baby girl, Fanny. Just a few months later, her lover and the baby's father, Gilbert Imlay, deserted her in brutal fashion. Distraught, Wollstonecraft tried to drown herself.

Later, she was required to pay off Imlay's debts and support herself and her baby

daughter by undertaking a journalistic trip of Norway, Sweden and Denmark. The articles, written in the form of letters, speak of a very different Wollstonecraft to her earlier work. Their tone is sober and tender, particularly about her daughter Fanny.

I feel more than the dependent and oppressed state of her sex. I dread that she should be forced to sacrifice her heart to her principles, or principles to her heart. With trembling hand I shall cultivate sensibility, and cherish delicacy of sentiment. I dread to unfold her mind, lest it should render her unfit for the world she is to inhabit - Happy woman! What fate is thine!

It is impossible not to feel touched by Wollstonecraft's personal tragedy two centuries on. She was a volatile woman who risked all for love. But she also lived in an age where economic independence for women was a rarity and unmarried motherhood a scandal. And, of course, childbirth itself was a far greater physical risk than it is today. Wollstonecraft died of blood poisoning barely two weeks after the birth of her second daughter. It is impossible not to feel deep gratitude to writers like her who have tried to argue for new ways of living for women, men and children, braving ridicule and hatred from the more conventional parts of society.

Melissa Benn is the author of *"Madonna and Child: towards a new politics of motherhood"* (Vintage £7.99)

Josefina Piá

PARAGUAY COULD have done with more women like Josefina Piá, the Spanish-born writer and artist who lived most of this century at her humble suburban home in Asunción. Not that Paraguay is short of courageous women in its recent history. It was women who held the country together when the male population was reduced to one tenth in the Triple Alliance war (1865-70), and then severely cut down again in the Chaco War in 1935.

But Josefina Piá was special. She kept an open house for all visitors who wanted to discuss history, literature and art, and equally for those who came to threaten her for her persistent opposition to the dictator Alfredo Stroessner, who ruled from 1954 to 1989.

Born in the Canary Islands in 1908, she went to Asunción in 1926 as the

teenage bride, aged 15, of a Paraguayan potter and ceramics artist, Andres Campos Cervera. From him she learned to paint and make pottery.

She began to piece together the shattered history of Paraguay in the 1930s, when nobody seemed interested in anything but surviving hunger. By the time she died she had published over 150 books of history, essays on links between Spanish and Paraguay's native Guaraní, studies of native and colonial art, and volumes of poetry and short story.

She lived near poverty most of her life, but she described herself as immensely wealthy in the knowledge of two languages and two cultures, and amused by the product of miscegenation encouraged by personal example by the first Spanish governor of Asunción, Domingo Martínez de Yrala.

In the Spanish-speaking world, her writing put her on a par with the Uruguayan Juana de Ibarboure, and Chile's Gabriela Mistral. But in surviving them and in virtually rebuilding the history of a country's art and culture, she stood alone.

The academic world and Latin Americanists will remember her for her main works of poetry, some of her theatre, and for her essay on what she called "Hispanic-Guaraní baroque". But a wider potential audience should also note her remarkable exploration of the history of British residents in Paraguay, who were largely responsible for building the basic grid of Asunción.

The British in Paraguay, 1850-1870 was published in London in 1976, largely thanks to the effort and translation of the former British ambassador in As-

cunción, B.C. MacDermot, and the support of St Antony's College, Oxford. Drawing on archives that survived the wars, Piá traced the lives and work of the engineers and skilled craftsmen who built the railways, shipyard and government house for Paraguay.

I first met Josefina Piá in the late 1970s, when Stroessner was still strong in power and she in her language about him. Our subject was always the British in Paraguay. But she too faded, feeling herself on the sidelines of a broader Latin America beyond the life of Asunción.

ANDREW GRAHAM-YOOLL

Josefina Piá, poet, historian and artist: born Las Palmas, Canary Islands 9 November 1908; married 1926 Andres Campos Cervera; died Asunción 11 January 1999.

Ancillary relief is fixed by court order

THURSDAY LAW REPORT

21 JANUARY 1999

Xydhias v Xydhias

Court of Appeal
(Lord Justice Stuart-Smith, Lord Justice Thorpe and Lord Justice Mummery)
21 December 1998

Principles, which dictated that unless all the material terms were agreed, or the contract contained an agreed mechanism for ascertaining what was not agreed, then there was no contract.

Patrick Eccles QC and Edward Hess (Bloxmoore, Leamington Spa) for the appellant; Michael Horowitz QC and Timothy Bishop (Mercy Messenger, Solihull) for the respondent.

Lord Justice Thorpe said that ordinary contractual principles did not decide the issues in the appeal. That was because an agreement for the compromise of an ancillary relief application did not give rise to a contract enforceable in law. The parties seeking to uphold such an agreement could not sue for specific performance. The only way of rendering the bargain enforceable was to convert the concluded agreement into an order of the court. Thereafter, the rights and obligations of the parties were determined by the order and not by any agreement which preceded it.

The order was absolute unless there was a statutory power to vary, or unless vitiated by a fact that would vitiate an order in any other division. The court did not either automatically or invariably grant the application to give the bargain the force of an order.

In consequence it was clear that the award to an applicant for ancillary relief was always fixed by the court. The payer's liability could not ultimately be fixed by compromise as could be done in the settlement of claims in other divisions. The purpose of negotiation, therefore, was not finally to determine the liability but to reduce the length and expense of the process by which the court carried out its function.

Litigants in ancillary relief proceedings were subjected to great emotional and psychological stresses, particularly as the date of trial approached. There were sound policy reasons supporting the conclusion that the judge was entitled to exercise a broad discretion to determine whether the parties had agreed to settle. The court had a clear interest in curbing excessive adversariality and in excluding from trial lists unnecessary litigation.

A more legalistic approach, as the present case illustrated, only allowed the inconsistent or manipulative litigant to repudiate an agreement on the ground that some point of drafting, detail, or implementation had not been clearly resolved. It was to be hoped that a case such as the present, requiring the exercise of the judge's discretion, would be a rarity.

KATE O'HANLON
Barrister

GAZETTE

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS

BIRTHS

SHAPIRO: On 18 January in Stockholm to Anna and Tony, a daughter, Maja.

DEATHS

KARLIN: On 19 January 1999, suddenly, Marc, aged 51. Most beloved husband of Hermione and adored father of Alexis and Anna. Family funeral. A celebration in his memory will be held later.

LECTURES

National Gallery: Carol Plazzotta, "Portraits (III): Stubbs, Whistler, Jockers". 1pm.
Aile Gallery: Justine Hopkins, "Sex, Creativity and Reputation: Rodin and Gwen John". 1pm.

BIRTHDAYS

Mr Adrian Beamish, former ambassador to Mexico, 50; Dr Alan Borg, Director, Victoria and Albert Museum, 57; Dr John Burnett, former Principal, Edinburgh University, 77; Dr David Carey, Joint Registrar, Faculty Office, Archbishop of Canterbury, 82; Lord Cayzer, company chairman, 89; Mr John Denison, former general manager, Royal Festival Hall, 88; Mr Plácido Domingo, operatic tenor, 58; Mr George Foulkes MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary for International Development, 57; Dr John Hayes, former Director, National Portrait Gallery, 70; Mr Kenneth Maginnis MP, 61; Sir George Humphrey Middleton, former diplomat, 89; Mr Jack Nicklaus, golfer, 59; Sir Nicholas Phillips, a Lord of Appeal in Ordinary, 61; Mr Paul Potts, Editor-in-Chief, the Press Association, 49; Miss Seona Reid, director, Scottish Arts Council, 49; Mr Paul Scofield, actor, 77; Mr Martin Shaw, actor, 54; Mr

Aubrey Singer, former Deputy Director-General, BBC, 72; Rear-Admiral Sir Richard Trowbridge, 78; Mr Laurence Whistler, glass-engraver and writer, 87; Mr Norman Willis, former General Secretary, TUC, 66.

ANNIVERSARIES

Births: Peter De Wint, painter, 1784; Thomas Attwood Walmisley, organist and composer, 1814; Thomas Jonathan ("Stonewall") Jackson, Confederate general, 1824; Sophia Louisa Jex-Blake, physician and women's liberation pioneer, 1840; Duncan James Corry Grant, painter, 1885; Cristóbal Balenciaga, couturier, 1895; Christian Dior, couturier, 1905; Benny Hill (Alfred Hawthorn Hill), comedian, 1924.

Deaths: Pope Pashal II, 1118; Henry Hallam, historian, 1859; Elisha Gray, inventor, 1901; Lenin (Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov), Russian leader, 1924; Lytton Giles

Strachey, biographer and critic, 1932; George Orwell (Eric Arthur Blair), novelist, 1950; Cecil Blount de Mille, film director, 1956; Marie Lohr, actress, 1975.

On this day: taxi-cabs were first officially recognised in Britain, 1907; a Bill aimed at raising the school-leaving age to 15 was defeated in the House of Commons, 1931; Edward VIII was proclaimed king, 1936.

Today is the Feast Day of St Agnes, St Alban or Bartholomew Roe, St Epiphanius of Pavia, St Fructuosus of Tarragona, St Melindard and St Patroclus of Troyes.

TOM JOHNSON- GILBERT

A service of thanksgiving for the life and work of Tom Johnson-Gilbert will be held at noon on Wednesday 10 February, at St Botolph-without-Aldersgate, in St Martin's le Grand, London EC1.

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

The Princess Royal, Colonel, The Blues and Royals, visits Hyde Park Barracks, London SW1; and, as President of Patrons, Crime Concern, attends the Pru Youth Action Luncheon, London EC1.

The Duke of Gloucester attends a reception for Ajax Housing Association, Ajax House, London N16.

CHANGING OF THE GUARD

The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am; 1st Battalion Welsh Guards mounts the Queen's Guard, at Buckingham Palace, 11.30am, band provided by the Scots Guards.

DILEMMAS
WITH VIRGINIA IRONSIDEShould I throw out my
drug-dealer son?

Anne's 24-year-old son lives at home, stays in bed till late, watches TV and gets extra money from drug-dealing. Though clever, he dropped out of A-levels. His father wants to throw him out, but Anne worries he'd get further into drugs and end up in prison. What should she do?

VIRGINIA'S ADVICE

A part from the drug-dealing and the age, Anne's son could be me as a 19-year-old. I never took A-levels, dropped out of secretarial college and art school, dropped out of finishing school in France, and spent a good nine months mooching around at home wondering what to do and feeling depressed and aimless. God knows how I survived, but had there been drugs readily available to deal in, who knows - I might have supplemented my income by buying small bits of dope and flogging them to friends.

I wasn't thrown out of home, but events took place that forced me to think about getting somewhere of my own, and that got me started. As for Anne's son, there is no real reason for the *status quo* to change. He's got a bed, he's got food, he's got television, and every night he can go out, get stoned, do a few deals and roll back home.

Smoking dope, which presumably he does, will take away most of his motivation, and so the situation could well go on for ever. He is 24, which is a bit elderly to be doing the loafing-around number, and the longer he stays at home doing nothing, the less self-respect he will have, the longer the gap will be on his CV, and the more depressed he'll be.

Probably it would be kindest to encourage him to move out. He could be

given lots of time, and some financial help. At least he would have to get up in the morning to look for rooms. And if he became a drug-dealer it would be terribly sad, but at 24 he has to take responsibility for his own life and its consequences. The last policeman I talked to, who was head of a London section, said he longed for drugs to be legalised because drug-dealing kept young people off the streets and in work.

And if he did end up in prison, at least he'd have endless opportunities for doing good and bad. As he is, he is barely living. Better to have lived and lost than never to have lived at all. But that's obviously not an option it's easy to risk when your own son's involved. My advice would be to pay for him to go round the world, if Anne could afford it. Make him into a ticket-of-leave man. Ensure that the first stop is not Amsterdam, but rather Australia, staying with a cheery, out-

doorsy sheep farmer. This is a way of getting rid of him but disguising it as an exciting experience. Which it is. If he goes to India, he cannot fail to appreciate how incredibly lucky he is. If he stays with Anne, he will know nothing but the patterns on his own four walls, the glimmer of daytime TV and the gloomy smell of dope down the pub. No life for a young man. Or indeed anyone.

READERS' SUGGESTIONS

I know how he feels. I think that I am similar to your son. I have always been multi-talented and of above average intelligence. I have a problem of not being able to stick to any one project for long.

After school, I was torn between art school, and doing a business degree. I am now at Nottingham university, but recently went over a rough patch and threatened to drop out in favour of art school.

Fortunately, my parents were firm and told me that they wouldn't support me to go to art school until I had finished my degree.

I think you should tell your son that you will not support him at home any longer, but will pay for him to gain qualifications, then help him find a place to stay. Perhaps you should help in guiding him to a career that utilises his

creativity, and involves a lot of dynamic change. NAME AND ADDRESS SUPPLIED

Aim for a happy life. My brother, now 57, has never stuck at anything for more than two or three years but he's successfully mastered and practised a huge number of skills. He's been a commercial traveller, a jobbing builder, a district councillor, a sheep-breeder...

I am sure my parents were worried about him when he was in his twenties, but he's had a happy life and has a lovely family and host of friends - what more could one ask? JOHN HAWGOOD Durham

Be cruel to be kind. Ten years ago, I relied on my grandparents for everything. I was into drugs, and

stole money from them to fund my diversions. I believe this was because I suffered from cataclysmically low self-esteem. But the reason was that I never did anything constructive. Anyway, I was finally asked to leave their home, and drifted into a series of low-paying clerical jobs, until finally I got my act together and went back to school. Now I am about to get my degree, and have a place on a graduate trainee programme. I value my achievements because I have earned them, rather than had them bestowed upon me.

Forcing me to leave home was the best thing my grandparents ever did for me. You may want a good life for your son, but if he chooses not to accept your gifts you can't force him to. It's up to him. B FOWLER

NEXT WEEK'S DILEMMA

Dear Virginia, My girlfriend and I have been living together for three years and things haven't really been going right, despite lots of talking. Now she wants a trial separation. I worry that once we part

we'll never get back together again. Should I insist on hanging on, or should I go? Yours sincerely, Brian

Anyone who has advice quoted will be sent a bouquet from Interflora. Send let-

ters and dilemmas to Virginia Ironside, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 4DL, fax 0171-293 2182, or e-mail dilemmas@independent.co.uk - giving a postal address for the bouquet.



Hilly Janes with her son: 'I used to give in to his demands, now he accepts that mummy is not such a pushover'

Neville Elder

A housewife's choice

Leaving a stressful career to care for her son and keep house has been a relief and a revelation for Hilly Janes. But it's also created an identity crisis

Hardly a day goes by without fresh sparks flying in my arms. The GP said I was hyperventilating. I had two miscarriages in two years. "Shabby" was how one of my best friends described our house, and she was being tactful. No wonder: it was suffering from total neglect. Not that it really mattered, "dinner party" was not part of my vocabulary.

When the chance came to stop, I leapt at it. Two things made it possible. My husband's Herculean efforts in front of the computer means that he is now well-paid enough to support all of us. I managed to negotiate a generous settlement from my employer. My husband's new job would be very demanding, but at least we wouldn't both be in the same boat. We could even afford to keep our nanny on part-time. Smug? No. I know how lucky I am.

"How does it feel not to work at all, what do you do all day?" people ask mostly of the workaholic variety. "How does it feel to be on Planet Tharg totally naked apart from a pair of rubber underpants on your head?" would be a less alien concept, judging by the look on their faces.

In many ways it feels great. Most of my former colleagues don't recognise me. Only one of them had the nerve to say why: "You look 10 years younger." Bedtime is no longer 10.30pm. I've seen more films, plays and exhibitions and read more books in the last six months than in the last six years.

I'm still having problems pronouncing "dinner party", but at least I've started cooking proper meals again and stopped shopping for World War III. When I worked all day, some repressed mothering instinct had me filling the late-night supermarket trolley with extra jars and tins of food, just in case. Most of them never got eaten.

I keep weekends free of household chores so that we can go on outings as a family. Now my husband gets a lie-in on Saturdays. I spend one day a week visiting my elderly parents. Our house has had a fresh lick of paint and the charity shop has benefited from a major decluttering session.

Best of all, my relationship with my son has improved no end. We are simply more at ease with each other. In my experience, the worlds of the busy executive and the capable mummy were totally at odds. Because time with him was precious, and I wanted it to be fun. I'd give in to his demands. No prizes for guessing who was in charge. I am sure I was not the only working parent who felt a sense of relief as I left the house on Mondays for the place I felt more at home in: the office.

Now I understand that arguing with a small child is futile. Changing the subject works far better, but this demands energy: playfulness, being on his wavelength, the very attributes that may be in short supply if you can't quite switch off from a problem at work or the four loads of dirty washing in the laundry basket. Now he accepts that mummy is not such a pushover, and I accept that if he doesn't like the new book, so what?

Renegotiating the ground rules with my husband is trickier. I am not a gracious housewife. Take last week's row about bananas. Why, I asked, should I lug home vast quantities of fruit from the supermarket, only for it to disappear into his briefcase? Don't they sell fruit in the West End, where he works? After all, if I found time to do all the shopping when I was working, how come he can't buy a few bananas?

There used to be a joke about how the only thing working women needed to get to the top was a wife. I found it funny then, but I don't now. If my husband had agreed to put his career on the back

burner for the sake of our mutual sanity, how much further up the greasy pole could I have slithered? I find these feelings of resentment humiliating. Have I really got nothing better to do than squabble about bananas? Can't I just be grateful that he is supporting me?

And why can't I get my act together? Being a housewife demands self-discipline and organisation, and even after six months I feel inadequate. Life used to be simple - get up, go to work, come home. Now the days and weeks have no internal rhythm. It is all too easy to fritter away the free time between dropping my son off at nursery and picking him up two hours later. Unless I write commitments down I risk double-book myself, or forgetting. And how come last night we ran out of milk, when I had been at home most of the day?

No doubt, practice makes perfect. But there is something else that will not improve. When I was working, I reminded myself frequently that certain people were interested in me because of what I was, not who I was. Knowing it was one thing; feeling it is something else, and the further I paddle my canoe from the familiar shore where status is measured in job titles and pay cheques, the scarier it gets. "You feel as if you are falling off the edge of everybody's radar, and it's frightening you," my husband said, and he's right.

I know what the pundits will say about Madonna. Good for her. But it's all very well, she's the boss. What about the rest of us? And we'll point a finger at employers and politicians who refuse to implement family-friendly working policies, put the blame on anybody else but ourselves. Perhaps we could start looking for the answers closer to home. Next time you meet somebody who makes their own marzipan, ignore the rubber underpants on her head, and show a little respect.

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LICENSING ACT 1964
NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR NEW JUSTICES LICENCE
COOKS, Bakers, Magistrates' Court, Market Place, Bedford.
HEARING DATE/TIME: Thursday 11 February 1999 at 11.00pm.
PREMISES: Staff Shop within Alpha Retail Warehouse, Green Lanes, Hemel Hempstead.
APPLICANT: Gareth Daniel Cronin.
ADDRESS: 7 Shire Close, Baginbun, Surrey GU19 5RA.
TRADE OR CALLING: Tobacco and Wine Buyer.
It is not intended to propose any alterations to the premises, but the premises may be used for the purposes of the proposed licence. A list of names and addresses of the persons who are to be licensed is attached to the application. A list of names and addresses of the persons who are to be licensed is attached to the application. A list of names and addresses of the persons who are to be licensed is attached to the application.

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POETIC LICENCE

BY MARTIN NEWELL
ILLUSTRATION BY MICHAEL HEATH

The development of Battersea Power Station has stalled again, after a wrangle over a 15m parcel of land which adjoins it. The London landmark, whose Art Deco turbine-hall fell silent almost 30 years ago, looks set to go into a third decade of controversy over its future use.

BATTERSEA POWER STATION
FROM A TRAIN

Rattling back of Battersea
A dirty decade on the run
The scuzzy old south London train
Chugs gamely on
Der-dun der-dun
Past billboards, gardens, terraces
From Clapham Junction, winding round
Towards a grey and turbid Thames
Victoria bound.

A stereogram-turned-upside-down
Its legs like cannons, bristling up
As jam-packed trains go groaning by
It threatens the anaemic sky
Unveil the sun
Der-dun der-dun.

Way over on the Chelsea Bridge
Where white-scarved ton-up boys met up
Who raced and crashed then married young
The shadows of its chimneys hung
On summer nights.

The sweat and tears of engineers
Religion: Church Of Industry
Worked harder than a percheron
The guts ripped out, the turbines gone
The scrapyard won
Der-dun der-dun.



OH MY GOD!

Immortalised by album sleeves
The building causes heads to turn
And foreign fans en route to gigs
Still try to solve the missing pigs
Phenomenon.

But somewhere in the yellowed past
A po-faced planner looked aghast
The architect was having fun
Der-dun der-dun
Der-dun der-dun.

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Fresh in from Frisco

Compared with its Angeleno neighbour, the San Francisco Symphony is an unknown quantity. But as London audiences will discover tonight, under Michael Tilson Thomas it's a world-class force. By Matthew Daines

Following close on the heels of the predominantly West Coast visitors to the Barbican Centre's "American Pioneer" series last autumn, Californian musicians are back in London once again tonight when the San Francisco Symphony makes only its second London appearance since Michael Tilson Thomas became its principal conductor in 1995. Having previously held the same position with the London Symphony Orchestra since 1986, Tilson Thomas is, of course, no stranger to the Barbican, but his appearance with the SFS marks a new high-water mark in American music. It signifies not only the growing stature of American symphony orchestras outside the "big five" - New York, Boston, Cleveland, Philadelphia and Chicago - but also a coming of age for West Coast musical life.

Unlike the Los Angeles Philharmonic, which gave two sensational performances at last summer's Proms, the recent achievements of the San Francisco Symphony have largely gone unsung. Indeed, the city of San Francisco itself has long languished in the shadow of Los Angeles, which attracted a string of émigré composers during the inter- and post-war years: Stravinsky, Schoenberg, Korngold and Martinu all made their homes there. The San Francisco Bay area, meanwhile, cultivated native Californian composers such as Henry Cowell, the inventor of the cluster, who grew up in the southern suburb of Menlo Park, and his student Lou Harrison, John Cage's microtonal collaborator, who spent his spare time studying scores in San Francisco's public library. It also witnessed the birth of American minimalism. LaMonte Young studied at UC Berkeley in the late Fifties; Steve Reich came west a few years later to study with Darius Milhaud at Mills College, Oakland; in 1964 the San Francisco Tape Music Center acted as midwife to Terry Riley's minimalist classic *In C*.

The San Francisco Symphony, too, has venerable history. Its first concertmaster, Louis Persinger, attracted the New York-born Yehudi Menuhin, who made his concerto debut with the SFS in 1926, as well as the Russian-born Isaac Stern, who made his debut with the orchestra 10 years later. Its most illustrious conductor during the Thirties and Forties was Pierre Monteux; Seiji Ozawa became principal conductor in 1970. But recently, it's the name of John Adams, the composer of *Nixon in China*, that has been most indelibly linked with the orchestra.

Adams, a native New Englander, had moved to the city after graduating from Harvard in the early Seventies and become director of the Contemporary Music Ensemble at the San Francisco Conservatory. So when the Dutch conductor Edo de Waart was appointed principal conductor of the SFS in 1977 and began, as he recalls, "looking for someone young to help me find my way around American music", Adams was the obvious choice.

Milton Sakind, then president of the Conservatory, made the initial introductions. Peter Pastreich, executive director



MTT balances the needs of the core audience with his support for new music *San Francisco Chronicle*

of the SFS, also brought Michael Steinberg from Boston as artistic adviser. With this triumvirate in place, the "New and Unusual Music" series was born, ushering in a golden age of musical life in the city and recordings of such Adams classics as *Shaker Loops*, *Harmontium* and *Harmonielehre*.

"Certainly it was the most exciting four or five years of my life," reflects De Waart from his new base in Sydney, Australia. "I had a sense that something good was happening, but how good it was I didn't realise until later." For Adams, the experience of programming the "New and Unusual Music" series and the chance to write for the San Francisco Symphony (he was appointed composer-in-residence in 1982) provided the environment he needed to learn about orchestral writing.

"The relationship between Edo and John was such a good example of a collaboration between a music director and a composer; this kind of intricate touching-up of details in rehearsals and kind of give-and-take," says Jorja Fleezanis, former co-leader of the orchestra. "The whole orchestra was really a kind of laboratory for him... This stuff was really fresh - very recently out of the birth canal, as it were."

After De Waart's departure for Minnesota in 1985, the SFS consolidated itself as a world-class orchestra under the direction of the Swedish conductor Herbert Blomstedt, who went on to put it on the musical map with tours of Asia, a stunning debut at the 1990 Salzburg Festival, and a series of acclaimed recordings for Decca.

But the iconoclastic tradition of San Francisco's musical forefathers finally came full circle in 1995 with the appointment of Bernstein's protégé Michael Tilson Thomas as principal conductor. As an American-born, native-Angelano conductor, Tilson Thomas is a rare commodity. His appointment builds on the strengths of both his immediate predecessors: the massive personnel changes made by De Waart, who replaced almost half the play-

ers, and the discipline and stylistic finesse cultivated by Blomstedt. According to Peter Pastreich, who has managed the orchestra for more than 20 years, "Michael brings an interest in similar repertoire to Blomstedt, but there's more showmanship and a more outward-going and communicative approach. And he's got the ensemble to do it with."

More significantly, Tilson Thomas's interests in Cowell and Harrison constitute a living link to San Francisco's iconoclastic musical past, while his penchant for American composers manifests itself in subtle programming that balances the needs of the core symphony audience with his support for new music. Thus the programme he brings to the Barbican this month combines classic American music - Charles Ives's *Three Places in New England* (or *A New England Symphony*) - with Prokofiev's Fifth Symphony and Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto (with Gil Shaham).

Tilson Thomas's masterstroke, though, has been to start performing the music of composers whom he counts as his friends and mentors outside the traditional symphony season. A series of new summer festivals began in 1996 with the two-week-long "An American Festival": the sight of MTT (as Tilson Thomas is universally known) improvising with members of the Grateful Dead was the talk of the town. "Celebrations of the Sacred and Profane" and a Mahler festival followed. This summer's event promises to focus on the music of a single 20th-century composer. "These festivals are part of what makes Michael want to be in San Francisco," says Pastreich. "They are that important to him."

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Sophisticated programming, aggressive outreach, imaginative educational initiatives and creative audience-development techniques can all be found in Europe. But the rise of the San Francisco Symphony is the story of a regional orchestra that's turned itself into a world-class ensemble by reinventing itself to reflect the changing needs of 21st-century audiences and the diverse communities it serves. It's a salutary tale with valuable lessons about a distinctly Californian approach to an American problem - lessons that regional orchestras in Europe might usefully follow.

ers, and the discipline and stylistic finesse cultivated by Blomstedt. According to Peter Pastreich, who has managed the orchestra for more than 20 years, "Michael brings an interest in similar repertoire to Blomstedt, but there's more showmanship and a more outward-going and communicative approach. And he's got the ensemble to do it with."

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Michael Tilson Thomas conducts the San Francisco Symphony at the Barbican Hall, London EC2 (0171-638 8891) at 7.30pm tonight

It's a kind of magic

THEATRE
STREET OF CROCODILES
QUEEN'S THEATRE
LONDON

IT'S NEARLY seven years now since Theatre de Complicité's *Street of Crocodiles* began life in the Cottesloe and took the breath away with those stupendous opening images. Figures from the story's past hatch out of crates of books or emerge, splitting plumes of water from tin baths. And, above all the rest, in more senses than one, a man walks down a brick wall at the back of the stage so that we seem to be getting an aerial view of a saunter along a moonlit street. "Is that abseiling or magic?" asked my 11-year-old assistant, as we watched this wondrously inventive and moving revival at the Queen's Theatre. We both readily agreed that the more perceptive answer would be "magic".

The piece works even better in the current larger space, the sheer height of the stage creating a brooding, shadowy top layer over this phantasmagoric plunge into the creative imagination of Bruno Schulz, the Polish-Jewish author, shot dead by an SS agent in 1942, whose weird stories are the launch-pad for the show. Looking at my old review, I found that I concentrated mostly on the earlier parts of this expressionist, physical-theatre event. Perhaps because I was viewing it with an impressionable child, I was more bowled over this time by the harrowing later stages, scored against searingly bitter-sweet and agonised string music.

The sinister sound of an army patrol punctuates the piece in which the lanky, sensitive Cesar Sarachu once again plays Joseph, the Schulz-surrogate at bay in a dark, totalitarian regime. Books - their vulnerability and transformative powers - are a strong and recurring image. Flapped about, alongside broileries, they become the exotic aviary of the hero's eccentric father. Or when the outside threat is at its greatest, rows of volumes cascade from the shelves with the frightening speed and force of a long, cold spring.

My companion said that much of it reminded her of *Alice*, if with a sadder undertone. The company creates a surreal, balletic world in which would-be lovers strain towards each other in an attempt to join the matching halves of symbolically broken plates, hindered by great bolts of cloth from the father's drapery store. And there's the marvellous final sequence when, after being shot, Joseph strips down to his undershorts and is passed tenderly, like a tiny baby, down the row of his family. A piercing image of the prematurity of that loss.

PAUL TAYLOR

Booking (0171-494 5040) to 20 Feb

Be faithful to your dreams

ONCE UPON a time not so long ago, that sixtiesomething-year-old Irish poet Brendan Kennelly was a raucous, joyously blaspheming sort of an individual who was in the business of ruffling feathers - remember the one about James Joyce having dinner with the Holy Family, for example? This week, he seemed altogether different - calmer, more subdued, more ethereal somehow, as though you might be able to put your hand straight through him. What happened?

In October 1996 he underwent triple heart-bypass surgery. Immediately afterwards he began to have dreams, if not visions. A man made of rain was beckoning to him, inviting

READING
BRENDAN KENNELLY
THE VOICE BOX
LONDON

him to journey at his side and talk with him about this and that. The experience turned into a long sequence of poems.

The way in which a poet reads is always a guide to what he is reading. In the past Kennelly has thrown down his words like a challenge, an indictment to rude literary behaviour. At *The Voice Box* he is turning over the pages of his book in a pernickety, chastened, ruminative way, and reading the words as if, though having written them, he is still

in pursuit of their significance. He is presenting us with a journey along roads which he is still walking.

Before a section called "Flowers and History" he pauses, flinging off his spectacles, to talk about something wondrous that happened during one of these spectral conversations. The face is fleshy, the cheeks a scoured apple-red, the grin companionable, the filmy eyes a delicate, cornflower-blue. One arm of his spectacles is heavily swathed in clear Sellotape.

The anecdote, once it begins, seems to take you by the elbow in some warm snug. It could go on for ever. And you would probably want it to - had you time. "It's all about our being walking graveyards," he says. "About the exhumation of memory - which is as much a part of writing a piece of music. These voices were coming at me, some from when I was as young as three or four..."

He recalls one in particular, the voice of Mary Ann, a neighbour. Well, it is not so much the voice he remembers, as the way she used to laugh - throwing her head back until her false teeth fell out, as she bragged about her pension.

Then, finally, the man made of rain, ever serendipitous, invites him to visit the grave of his father, and to dandle his father's bones in his hands. Kennelly recalls his father with gentleness and affection. "He was such a lovely, intelligent, lazy man," he tells us, "who always used to say that the streets of Ireland were never well aired before 11 o'clock." Then his mood darkens. "He was also an example of the far and against mind, the idea that we have an enemy, and that there are no complexities. He was a Collins man himself."

Then down he goes, into that blue Shannon light of his father's grave, peering about for those marvellous speaking bones. "The thing is not so much to explain the dreams as to be faithful to them," he adds, shouting up to us.

MICHAEL GLOVER

And the outlook is unsettled

BAD WEATHER is the singularly off-putting title of a long, elusive, often inexplicable yet also strangely rewarding new play by Robert Holman which opened last year at Stratford's Other Place, and transfers to The Pit. The impulse to shout "No, I really can't believe a word of this" is checked, again and again, by sequences that suddenly succeed in assenting their own delicately nuanced criterion of credibility. While even Pimlott's production may be too evenly paced, it cumulatively hypnotises you with its intent, unhurried dedication to the play's vision and the detailed truthfulness of the performances.

The proceedings begin amid the graffiti and scuzzy corru-

THEATRE
BAD WEATHER
THE PIT
BARBICAN, LONDON

gated sheeting of a run-down Middlesbrough council estate. Luke, a young yob, has beaten up a man outside a Chinese takeaway, but it's his best friend, Jamie, who takes the rap and is sent down for four years. Jamie's depressed, déclassée mother, Kay, once the rich heiress of a rather different estate in France, embarks on a sexual relationship with the one juror who sided with her son. But the idea that we are in for a social-realist piece about deprivation and divided loyalty (will the incar-

cerated Jamie grass?) is quickly scotched by the arrival of the mother's one-time nanny. Played with a quite mesmerising authority and understated chic by Susan Engel, 60-year-old Agnes takes enigmatic control of the situation, like a cross between a Gallic Mary Poppins and the Duke in *Measure for Measure*.

There is something oddly Shakespearean about the play's movement from Tees-side to the idyll of a sun-kissed, dilapidated French château where Agnes sweeps the cast off for a holiday. It reminds you of those shifts into the heightened realms of Arden, Ilyria and the wilds of Wales from which people emerge transformed in his comedies. Except that redemption comes at a price, and only ambiguously. In the world Holman creates here, with its repeated pattern of emotional displacement, it's a world in which, bizarrely, mothers such as Kay (who is all pained and frayed refinement in Susan Brown's moving performance) are better at being surrogate parents to other people's children than proper mothers to their own. The imprisoned youth (played with a pent-up, cigarette-crushing intensity by Ryan Pope) is more adept at taking the rap than in taking responsibility for himself. Even the weather, with its freak spring snow showers, seems to be firing just off-target.

What helps to bring these matters into a tentatively truer alignment is a love affair between 60-year-old Agnes and 21-year-old Luke. It sounds like the kind of thing that could only happen in an Iris Murdoch novel. Thanks to Engel and Paul Popplewell's beguilingly fresh and cocky Luke, it is not laughed off the stage here.

I am far from certain that I have grasped the play's tricky emotional logic, but I know that this is a piece that is going to live with me for a long time. Holman's 1990 Royal Court play *Riffs and Dreams* is, in my view, one of the most underrated dramas of the decade. I hope that *Bad Weather* has a happier fate.

PAUL TAYLOR
Booking: 0171-638 8891

THE INDEPENDENT

Win a short break on a Mediterranean cruise

The Short Breaks Exhibition is being held at the Royal Horticultural Halls from January 22-24. It is the only UK exhibition dedicated to short breaks and exciting days out. Over 200 travel companies will be there offering everything from city breaks to rural retreats, activity adventures to health spas. The Royal Horticultural Halls are located on Greycoat Street, London SW1. The nearest mainline station is Victoria. Show opening hours Friday and Saturday 10.00am - 6.00pm, Sunday 10.00am - 5.00pm. Tickets are £5 on the door. Take along your copy of The Independent and buy a ticket for the Short Breaks Exhibition and get your next ticket free.

To help to promote the first Short Breaks Exhibition, British Airways Holidays and Orient Lines are offering readers of The Independent the chance to win a pair of tickets to sail away on a night Mediterranean "Rome & The Riviera" Cruise on the Marco Polo ship. Experience the sights, sounds, tastes and treasures that some of Europe's top destinations have to offer. Highlights include Italian ancient cities of Rome and Pisa, chic Portofino, glittering Cannes on the French Riviera and Spain's sunshine island of Majorca.

The prize includes British Airways scheduled flights, 1 night pre departure stay in the 'Eternal City' of Rome and 1 night post cruise stay in Barcelona, arguably Spain's most stylish and exotically City. Brochure Prices from £1,065. Three runners up will also win a set of British Airways luggage merchandise, including: on board trolley case (compliant with the new cabin storage restrictions), cabin bag and holdall - normally retail price £160. Plus when you attend the Short Breaks Exhibition you could enjoy an extra 10% saving on 26 Wintersaver City break destinations, with already great prices such as Paris £119, Amsterdam £155, Rome £189, Florence £199, Madrid £179.

All you have to do is to dial the number below, answer the following question on the line and leave your name, full address and a daytime contact number.

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a) Olympia b) Royal Horticultural Halls c) Earls Court

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A pox upon those men in tights

So you want to do doublet, hose and a bit of ruff... What's standing in your way? History, of course. Then again, the historical movie isn't quite what it used to be. By Boyd Tonkin

Shekhar Kapur may have picked up a sheaf of warm reviews for his Bollywood-flavoured chronicle of the young Elizabeth, but not many critics dwell on a bit part that outshone even Eric Cantona's weirdly-vowelled cameo. As the French regent Mary of Guise, Fanny Ardant pouted and sneered and heaved to a pitch of bosomy excess that drove an earnest period piece well down the road towards Carry On Up the TUDORS. Indeed, Barbara Windsor herself could hardly have surpassed the Fanny who dipped her flag in enemy gore and rasped at a cringing envoy: "Tell your Eenglish Queen not to send boieez to faahit Maree of Guise."

Did these OTT flourishes damage the picture? Not a bit. We expect a slice of ham served up with our screen history now. Two generations of gleeful parody - from *Up Pompeii* and *Morecambe and Wise* to *Blackadder* and beyond - have wrapped all costume drama in a swathe of farce that serious intentions (or serious acting) alone can never wish away.

For every setting prior to a pretty recent date, history now means high camp. From togas to tiaras, studio-soiled conventions stand between the audience and a proper appreciation of the past like so many sleeping policemen - or rather, laughing policemen. As Kapur's Elizabeth grasped, planned giggles can help suspend our disbelief and forestall too many out-of-place guffaws. Better to cackle at the director's bidding than

during that tender love scene or crucial diplomatic crisis. Costume cinema now has to vaccinate its viewers against what Ken Starr might call inappropriate laughter. When, exactly, do our automatic sniggers end? In spite of Judi Dench's balloon-like bathing cozzie and Billy Connolly's kilts, there seemed little intrinsically absurd about John Madden's *Mrs Brown*. A few decades further back, Jane Austen adaptations seldom suffer too much of a credibility gap from their snazzy waistcoats and A-line dresses. Could language be the key? Up to a point, but strip out the forsooths and gadzooks from the Flynn-and-Fairbanks era swashbuckler, and it still looks daft.

No: I have a theory that silliness ends when trousers begin. The arrival of tubular male legwear in the early 19th century (and, perhaps, a bit more plausibly, the advent of photography) marks a decisive breach between ancients and moderns. On the button as ever, Mel Brooks fingered the problem in the subtitle he gave to his burlesque of Robin Hood movies: "Men in Tights".

In *Shakespeare in Love*, his next project after *Mrs Brown*, John Madden skewers plots a way through most of the men-in-tights tangles. His Oscar-tipped spoof-biopic embraces the corniest aspects of cinematic ruff trade and somehow comes through quite unscathed. How? The two-word answer is "Tom Stoppard", as the playwright's sprightly upgrade of a screenplay by Marc Norman allows him a new spin on some of his best - and oldest - tricks. As in *Rosencrantz*



All they stood up in: although how much Joseph Fiennes in 'Shakespeare in Love' (above) owes Rowan Atkinson's 'Blackadder' (below) is moot

and *Cuiderstern* (more than 30 years ago now), Stoppard doodles cheekily marginalia around the edges of Shakespearean lore and legend. In his trademark Existential-Lite fashion, he juggles in that shifting space between art and life, limelight and daylight. If the knowing gags of *Blackadder* prop up one end of *Shakespeare in Love*, the theatrical sorcery of *Les Enfants du Paradis* supports the other. Meanwhile, the whole genial shebang coasts along according to the rhythms of the it'll-be-all-right-on-the-night-backstage melodrama. Broadway babes carouse in the gutters of Shoreditch: it's a sort of *42nd Alley*.

Needless to say, the conceit of an upstairs-downstairs affair between Joe Fiennes's blocked wordsmith and Gwyneth Paltrow's betrothed heiress owes as much to proven fact as *Star Trek* does to Stephen Hawking's astrophysics. Not that it ever aspires to authenticity: en route to

meeting the flame-haired Muse who will inspire *Romeo and Juliet*, young Will is toiling over a turkey to be called *Romeo and Ethel, the Pirate's Daughter*. Do we detect a nod to Marc Norman's script for that shipwreck of a seaborne epic, *Cutthroat Island*? I suspect we do.

Stoppard and Norman know that we know this is mostly amiable tosh. They take aim not at the neb-

ulous reality of London in 1593 but at the crust of screen cliché that congeals around it. *Shakespeare in Love* niftily deflates not the actual theatre of the time but the Props Department version of it. One hopes that no film or TV actor will ever dare to glue on a goatee or strap on a scabbard in anger again.

And yet... If parody alone ac-

counted for the pleasures of the film, it would hardly rise above the Monty Python benchmark. The pantomime jokes, the sly asides, the self-conscious historical howlers: all of these plays inculcate us against the off-putting routines of the period biopic. Yet, once this vaccine kicks in, Stoppard, Norman and

Madden can do something rich and strange with a clapped-out genre. Behind the farce and hummer, they sow a genuine sense of the marvels of creation: how a private passion can flow obliquely into public art; or how a rabble of warring egos can somehow come together to make a wondrous new thing on stage (or screen).

This is a truly Shakespearean - and Stoppardian - insight, even if none of the dates add up, the *Sonnets* to a male "master-mistress" get redirected to La Paltrow, Judi Dench's Queen drops in on first nights, and Martin Cumes gives us the inevitable jowly burst of Burbage Behaving Badly. "It's a mystery", runs a line that passes from character to character like a relay baton - most movingly, when Mark Williams, as the tailor-turned-player who acts the Prologue in *Romeo and Juliet*, overcomes his stutter to voice the play's opening lines.

In mood, this glimpse of a miracle born out of comic muddle recalls not *Romeo* itself so much as a *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. In the Athenian wood, that chaotic "story of the night" grows at last into "something of great constancy, but howsoever strange and admirable". In the end, it is all right on the night.

We expect a slice of ham served up with our history now. History means high camp

Truth is the drug

You've got to hand it to James Toback. Few film-makers have gone so far in the name of research and lived to tell the tale. By Liese Spencer

IN 1987 James Toback directed Robert Downey Jr in *The Pick-Up Artist*, a breezy romantic comedy about a compulsive womaniser. Over a decade later, director and star are reunited for *Two Girls and A Guy*, a more sombre dissection of modern relationships which sees Downey's duplicitous charmer cornered by the women he has been two-timing, and made to squirm. "We always wanted to work together again" says Toback, "but it wasn't until I saw Robert handcuffed outside Malibu courthouse in his orange smock that I knew he was ready."

Toback wrote *Two Girls and A Guy* for his friend over the following week, then shot the film in 11 days, before Downey went back behind bars. As a study of male selfishness, vanity and self-serving sophistry, Downey's wheedling womaniser is a triumph. But whether the character of Blake Allen says more about Toback or Downey is debatable. "I thought I was writing him," says Toback, "but he said that he was 'doing me'."

Whatever the truth, Toback isn't perturbed by the suggestion that his slippery lead is a self-portrait. Unlike other film-makers who fight shy of reductive autobiographical parallels, Toback has always embraced the idea of living his life as a kind of wild, novelistic fiction, while using his films to blur the boundary between reality and fantasy. "I barely find a distinction," says Toback. "I see my films as a continuation of what I'm thinking about, while my life is a preparation for the next film."



Who's zoomin' who? James Toback with Robert Downey Jr

Toback with a cocktail of heroin and thiazine that glued his brain back together.

Before his 28th birthday, he had married and divorced an English aristocrat and developed a ferocious gambling habit that would introduce him to a criminal underworld (dramatised in both 1977's *Fingers* and 1991's *Bugsy*) and mire him in debt to the tune of \$1m.

"I do get excited by what other people would consider to be reckless behaviour," admits Toback. "I may be chemically addicted to it. I've had a few near-death experiences. I like it when the stakes are high."

After graduating, Toback began teaching at New York's City College and contributing articles to magazines. Assigned to write a piece on football player Jim Brown, he disappeared into the sportsman's mansion where he swapped lectures for drug-fuelled orgies. When he surfaced, two years later, he wrote his first screenplay: *The Gambler*.

Part Dostoevsky, part autobiography, the film starred James Caan as a risk-addicted academic. With characteristic hyperbole, Toback sees it as his salvation. "If Karel Reisz had not chosen to direct *The Gam-*

bler, I don't think I would have had a career in film-making. Left to my own devices, my naturally chaotic and provocative instincts would have long since led me to some catastrophic consequence. I think I would have been dead by now."

Toback's self-mythologising might seem pathetic were it not for the director's determination to translate his existential hell-raising into equally risky cinema. To date, Toback's attempts to put his student experiences on film in *Horror Man* have foundered (although a pre-natal of Caprio was "dying to do it", Toback's script was turned down by 10 studios). But a succession of other, highly personal movies have confirmed David Thomson's description of Toback as "America's most uninhibited filmmaker", an auteur unafraid to risk life, limb and pretension to root out larger truths.

Take his ambitious 1989 documentary, *The Big Bang*, which saw Toback rounding up a group of 19 talking heads (including an Auschwitz survivor, a movie star and a gangster) to talk about love, sex, death and the whole damn thing. Not all such gambles have paid off. *Exposed*'s story of an interna-

tional model (Nastassia Kinski) caught between terrorist Harvey Keitel and violinist Rudolph Nureyev springs to mind. Still, you can't help but admire Toback's willingness to stake his soul on such "serious and original" film-making.

In *Two Girls and A Guy*, Toback once again cannibalises his own experience - this time as a shameless philanderer (*Spy* magazine once devoted a double-page spread to Toback's chat-up lines, which tragically included "I work closely with Warren Beatty") - to explore wider themes of monogamy and masculinity. Hot on its heels comes *Black and White*, "a movie about race, sex and identity" starring Brooke Shields, Downey Jr, Mike Tyson and the Wu Tang Clan, inspired by Toback's time "as the only white guy" at Jim Brown's house.

"A friend asked me, 'do you realise the storm this is going to cause?'" laughs Toback. "He said, 'when the film comes out, you're either going to have to stand in the middle of a volcano, or go into hiding.'" No guesses which Toback will choose.

"Intelligent, funny, moving... Beatty's finest work to date... a return to real film-making, cinema of quality and substance."
Phil Jupitus - UNCUT

"Truly a terrific film."
NEON

"Warren Beatty back on blistering form."
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"Lovely, savage stuff..."
Barry Norman - THE RADIO TIMES

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BULWORTH WARREN BEATTY
HALLE BERRY

STARTS TOMORROW AT SELECTED CINEMAS

Two Girls and A Guy opens on 29 January

The hospitality trade

Tourism, seldom a career choice for graduates, has been given an upgrade. By Kate Hilpern

When Rob Devlin embarked on a degree in popular music and cultural sociology, he had every intention of becoming a music journalist. But only a few months after leaving university, his aspirations not only changed direction completely, but he found himself reaching them within an industry traditionally sneered at by graduates: tourism. What's more, he's earning double what he expected, with double the responsibility.

"I started working at the Granada Studio Tour in Manchester to earn some extra cash while I was a student," he explains. "Now, as entertainment manager, I'm responsible for a team of 70 people. The next step is becoming operations manager. I never dreamt of coming so far so fast."

The English Tourist Board (ETB) has found it so hard to attract graduates such as Rob, however, that it has launched an urgent recruitment drive. With at least 15 per cent of all vacancies remaining unfilled at any time, the ETB has started a net-based initiative - Career Compass.

"It's an international first in tackling careers information and job opportunities across the breadth of the travel, tourism and hospitality industries," explains Richard Allen, head of training and business support at ETB. "Tourism is one of the top five industries in the UK, providing 1.7 million jobs - and yet young people still tend to consider it as an option for the second best. We want to show this image as unfair and inaccurate."

But, he admits, it will be no mean feat. The industry has not been good on putting out stories of career successes, and with the rise in the number of degrees specifically focusing on tourism, job-seekers often wrongly assume this is now a prerequisite for any of the decent positions. "In reality, many graduates choose tourism as a career after they've finished university and therefore have completely unrelated degrees. The reason this is not necessarily a problem is because a lot



As a student, Rob Devlin earned extra cash working on the Granada Studio Tour. Now he's entertainment manager. Martin Rickett

of the companies in tourism believe previous experience is less important than the individual's potential." In other words, for graduate recruits, the subject of your degree may not even be relevant.

Indeed, Julie Ashton was running a bar in a popular holiday resort - in which she was turning over £400,000 and was responsible for the development of 14 staff - by the time she was 25, just two years out of university. All this with a degree in fine art. "My friends started to envy me immediately - not only because of the status I'd achieved but because the work is such fun. That's exactly what you're there for - to make sure people have fun." But, she claims, it's harder work than she could ever have imagined. "You have to be available for at least 14 hours a day."

Andrew Palmer of the British Institute of Innkeeping remarks: "In the past, a career in hospitality - which accounts for 80 per cent of tourism - was frowned upon by many as being frivolous. But today's companies need graduates to survive, so they're investing in training and good salaries."

Visitor attractions such as Chess-

ington World of Adventures and Thorpe Park, and hotel chains like Trusthouse Forte, are following suit, creating an environment in which graduates can make an immediate impact. But most companies say graduates must be prepared to pitch in with the mundane jobs to get a feel for what it takes to make the day-to-day operations run smoothly and effectively.

"Chessington has made the work for its staff extremely varied," says spokesperson Charlie Broom. "It can mean doing things managers in other industries wouldn't dream of, but it makes the job far more exciting."

Small wonder that other sectors of the economy are recognising the skills development that people working within tourism are acquiring, says Richard Allen. "Skills learned in tourism-based industries are transferable. So it's not as if staff are ever putting all their eggs in one basket."

According to Brian Prescott, partnership development manager of the Travel and Tourism Programme, enthusiasm, ambition, excellent customer service skills and basic business awareness are what the tourism industry looks for. The ability

for candidates to inspire and motivate their team members, have new ideas and deliver more than is expected is paramount - a fact that Sarah Scarratt knows all too well.

"I got a degree in French, rather than anything vaguely tourism-related, but wound up running guided tours for students at Beaulieu, the national motor museum," she explains. "I'd helped out in the Easter holidays, and was offered a job because I'd revealed the skills they were looking for. It was quite unexpected, but it's been so worthwhile. There are now around 35,000 students visiting a year, which is a hell of a lot to be in charge of, and I've had experiences that I'd never have had anywhere else. In fact, it wasn't long before I was promoting the tours abroad on a regular basis."

But the Scottish National Party is not quite so optimistic about the future of careers within tourism as its English counterparts. "I know Scotland's tourist boards are very keen on increasing the training of people in the industry," says Alisdair Morgan, employment spokesperson. But, like English tourist boards, the problem is they are hampered by discretionary

funding, which prevents them developing long-term strategies to promote the sector.

"They literally exist from year to year. The Government has to say that tourism is important in order for this problem to be overcome," he claims. "In some areas, it is the biggest industry." In Scotland, for instance, tourism is bigger than the whisky, oil, car and agricultural industries combined in terms of employment. But with little job security, graduates may be put off.

Nevertheless, claims Brian Prescott, with an increase in staff at graduate level, the success of British tourism could grow to such an extent that funding is made more permanent. "It can make a career in tourism even more attractive to graduates because it's more of a challenge," he says.

Rob Devlin agrees. "Trying to help run any business which relies on visitors keeps you on your feet. And that's what makes it so satisfying when it works." It's high time that the negative image of the industry held by so many students, parents and educationalists is seen for what it is, he claims - completely outdated.

On the trail to success

CV

MARK DIXON

MARK DIXON, 37, is executive chairman and founder of Regus, Europe's largest operator of business centres. He left school to trek around the world in search of learning experiences. He obviously picked up a few things - Regus now has a turnover of £128m.



At 16 years old, when I'd reached the top of my school, I decided that the education system was a little slow for me. I knew that my contemporaries would be going to college and I wanted to have really got somewhere by the time they were leaving.

My first project was setting up a simple business called Dial-a-Snack, delivering sandwiches on a bike. It was great, but I soon realised that if I just earned money without learning anything, I wasn't going to make it. So after six months I sold the business and went off to trek around the world.

The first stop was France. My parents were mortified and thought I had thrown everything away. But I wound up getting a job in Papagayo, probably the most famous bar/restaurant in France. I quickly learnt everything there is to know about running restaurants and clubs and dealing with lots of people. It was to stand me in good stead for ever.

After eight months, I prepared for my next venture - back-tracking across Asia. Then, at 18, I went walking around Australia, where I also wound up selling encyclopaedias, working in an iron mine, and becoming a lumberjack.

When I got back to England, I started up in the hot-dog van business. I quickly went from having one van to six vans. A

couple of years later I moved into making hamburger buns - that became the third biggest firm, making 8,000 buns a week and employing 100-plus people. It broke my heart, but I sold it after five years for £800,000 - my first big sale.

Next, I decided I wanted to do business in Europe, so in early 1989 I moved to Brussels and looked around for the right kind of business. I opened Regus in September.

There were two main things that attracted me to the idea. First, business centres at that time were catering to small firms, whereas they should have been after middle-sized and big ones. And secondly, the property business was, and still is, one of the last bastions of not "talking to your customer" and finding out their needs. One of our key strategic goals now is to open a centre in every country in the world.

My travelling years really set me up; they taught me how to get things done and be resourceful. There is no safety net. Nothing has daunted me since then. But you've got to have a strict plan. You can't just bum around or you end up wasting your life. I could have stayed in the south of France - it's a good life. But I knew that one day, I'd want something more.

INTERVIEW BY MARK OLIVER

Parents without power

AMID ALL the media coverage and the opposing PR offensives, what the Bramleys have highlighted is the powerlessness experienced by foster-parents in the situation that the couple were in last August. The whole thrust of the legislative framework is aimed at protecting the child, and not at helping foster-parents or would-be adopters, no matter how deserving or desperate they appear to be.

The recent move by Cambridgeshire County Council in the much-publicised case of Jade and Hannah Bennett was obviously made with an eye to taking some of the heat out of the opposition to its social services department caused by Jeff and Jenny Bramley's dramatic gesture. It is likely that Cambridgeshire has had to discharge its care orders over both girls in order to invoke the assistance of the High Court's inherent jurisdiction. By doing this, the council has shifted the responsibility of deciding the future of the two girls away from itself and into the High Court - the independent body which the Bramleys sought.

The court has appointed the Official Solicitor to act as guardian ad litem for Jade and Hannah, which ensures that an experienced member of a central government department will investigate all the circumstances, consider what is in the girls' best interests, and make representation to the court on their behalf.

Given the number of natural parents and foster-parents involved, the Bramleys, as parties to the proceedings, may make whatever application to the court they wish through their solicitor, including one to adopt the girls; the girls' natural

OUR LEARNED FRIEND



PAULINE FOWLER

parents may be separately represented. In the meantime, no major change will be made without the court's sanction.

The question to ask is: why wasn't this step taken earlier? The Bramleys had been missing for 17 weeks with the two girls before Cambridgeshire social services department - publicly at any rate - started making conciliatory noises.

But the legal process the local authority has invoked is unusual - the council had to satisfy the court that the result that the council wanted to achieve could be achieved by the court only through its jurisdiction, and that there was reasonable cause to believe that the children were likely to suffer significant harm if that jurisdiction were not exercised.

Admittedly, the legal remedies open to foster-parents who are unhappy about a local authority's decision to remove a child from their care (subject to a care order) are not extensive. There are a number of possibilities, but the time limits attached to the first two meant that neither was open to the Bramleys:

■ If the child has lived with them for at least three years, foster-parents may make an application under the Children Act for a residence order. If they do not satisfy the three-year residence condition, they must first obtain the consent of the local authority.

■ They can apply for an adoption order - but, without local authority backing, the child/ren must have lived with them for 12 months or more.

■ They can apply for an emergency protection order (EPO), which would prohibit the local authority from removing the child. An EPO would buy only eight days' grace.

■ They can ask the Divisional Court for leave to proceed with a judicial review of the local authority decision. It is also possible for foster-parents to follow the complaints procedure that local authorities have set up, or to ask the local authority to review its decision, and in both cases they can call on the authority to move quickly and to leave the child in their care in the meantime so that he or she has some stability.

But none of these will seem particularly appealing to foster-parents who are aggrieved by what they may well see as unpenetrable decision-making by the social services department. Now that the drama of the Bramleys' bid for parental power is being played out within the safety of the High Court, it may be time to consider realistically whether we really want social workers to focus on the welfare of would-be adopters - or on the welfare of the children.

Pauline Fowler is a partner in the family department at Bates Wells & Braithwaite

Britain's top campaigning lawyer is determined to make a difference. By Linda Tsang

Day of the public is here

MARTYN DAY, a solicitor, is "awkward and bolshie" - and he should know; that is his own description of himself. But if you are an individual wanting to take on the nuclear industry, the tobacco industry, or both the Japanese and the British government, he is probably the kind of "awkward" lawyer whom you want on your side.

Last week, he met Derek Fatchett, the Foreign Office minister, as part of the ongoing quest for compensation and an apology for Japanese prisoners of war. Day's involvement with the case began in 1994 when his uncle, John Gott, asked him to advise the Japan Labour Camp Survivor's Association. The case collapsed at the end of last year in the Tokyo courts, but Day says that, after last week's meeting, it is possible that the Government will reconsider its position.

Day is looking for £13,500 compensation for each of his clients, who received £76 apiece when they returned from Japan in 1955. He says: "Either the British Government will be persuaded to make a claim under Article 26 of the 1951 Peace Treaty with Japan, or the Government will have to pay our claim. Obviously, the PoWs would prefer that the money come from Japan, and that would still leave the issue of an apology open."

Taking on causes like these has led some to describe Day as a lawyer for lost causes. He has challenged British Nuclear Fuels (BNFL), and sued ICI and the London Docklands Development Board over public nuisance.

The tobacco litigation is also back on track after numerous cases "which pooled on for four years revolving around legal aid funding". The Court of Appeal is due to deliver its judgment in

February on whether a number of lung cancer victims are time-barred from continuing in the case. Day says: "What is quite crucial for us is that this is the first time that the judge has looked at the case in any depth."

"The judge will look at the merits of the case - and how he deals with the eight lead plaintiffs will be significant. If he threw all eight cases out, it wouldn't be the end; we still have a group who can continue the case. But we would be very nervous if he made that decision."

The tobacco companies are following this case with keen interest. This is one of the first and largest cases to be run on the basis of no win, no fee, or as Day has called it, "no win, no fee and possible bankruptcy". He estimates that both his firm, Leigh Day & Co, and Irwin Mitchell, have "put up serious money" for this case, investing £3m to £4m in costs and time.

Day also says it is an indication of the commitment of the barristers he has instructed - Robert Owen QC and Brian Langstaff QC - that they are also prepared to act in what may be a six-month trial, and have deferred payment of their fees.

Also, with the recent clamp-down on legal aid, the Lord Chancellor is keeping an eye on the litigation and the way that conditional fees are used in such cases. Day does admit: "If we win, it will persuade other firms to take cases on this basis. But if we don't win, apart from a number of 'I told you so's' for this firm, having persuaded my partners once to do this sort of case, I can't see us doing it again."

The fact that his two major cases are "totally uncharted waters" is what appeals to Day. He is in a position now where he looks for the plo-



Martyn Day, champion of the underdog. Tim Hetherington

neering cases, and is interested in "crafting a case that is unusual".

The point of the firm, which was set up in the late Eighties, was "to give the ordinary man or woman who has been injured in an unusual way the opportunity to take on the corporate world with all its resources. That has been our skill, and where we can make a difference."

Almost all the cases that Day and his firm have taken on have been widely reported in the media. His view is that with such long-running battles, getting positive coverage is part of the lawyer's role in acting for the underdog. With the PoWs' case, he has the backing of the shadow Foreign Secretary, Michael Howard, and Chris Patten, the former governor of Hong Kong.

Day chose to do law because law and accountancy were the only two options that vaguely interested him. As his father had been an accountant, he decided to do law, at

Warwick, and came to London to do articles. He ended up at the legal aid firm Bindman & Partners, where he threatened to strike over the low pay of the support staff. He was offered a partnership, but left to set up his current firm with Sarah Leigh. The firm now has 14 partners.

Now 41, and with four children aged between two and eight, he quotes the lawyer whom he considers his role model of sorts, Rodger Pannone, senior partner at Pannone & Partners, who told him to "remember your family; the kids are only young once, and you only have one wife at a time".

Day is also looking at other areas where his firm can "make a difference. It's right and proper that we can use the legal system to bring the chickens home to roost against big business. A year ago the health risks associated with mobile phones looked very speculative, but the evidence is mounting up."

THE THURSDAY REVIEW
The Independent 21 January 1999

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THURSDAY RADIO

RADIO 1
(97.9-98.9MHz FM)
6.30 Zoe Ball, 9.00 Simon Mayo, 12.00 Kevin Greening, 2.00 Mark Radcliffe, 4.00 Chris Moyles, 5.45 Newsbeat, 6.00 Clive Warren, 8.00 Steve Lamacq - Evening Session, 10.00 Trade Update, 10.30 John Peel, 12.00 Andy Kershaw, 2.00 Emma B, 4.00 - 6.30 Scott Mills.

RADIO 2
(88-92MHz FM)
6.00 Sarah Kennedy, 7.30 Wake Up to Wogan, 9.30 Ken Bruce, 12.00 Jimmy Young, 2.00 Ed Stewart, 5.05 Johnnie Walker, 7.00 David Allen, 8.00 Paul Jones, 9.00 Barry Took's Comedy Classics: Beyond Our Ken, 5.30 Comedy Showcase: The Pigs Back, 10.00 Melly Talks Jazz. See *Pick of the Day*, 10.30 Richard Allinson, 12.00 Katrina Leskanich, 3.00 - 4.00 Alex Lester.

RADIO 3
(90.2-92.4MHz FM)
6.00 On Air, 9.00 Masterworks, 10.30 Artist of the Week, 11.00 Sound Stories, 12.00 Composer of the Week: Purcell, 1.00 The Radio 3 Lunchtime Concert. The second of three recitals of Haydn string quartets recorded at the Royal Northern College of Music as part of Haydnfest 99, 2.05 The BBC Orchestra, 4.00 Ensemble, 4.45 Music Machine, (R), 5.00 In Tune, 7.30 Performance on 3. Conductor Andrew Litton, Peter Jablonksi (piano), Dan Welch: Bright Wings (first UK performance), Garthwin: Piano Concerto in F, Stravinsky: Petrushka (1947 version), 9.30 Postscript: 4. 'Thoroughly Modern Monet'. As one of the original impressionists, Monet is often thought of primarily as a 19th-century artist, but he painted more than 450 paintings after 1900. Some of his later work was neglected and left in his studio after his death in 1926, but Monet's reputation underwent a dramatic revival in the 1950s, when critics saw a link between his late works and those of the abstract expressionists. John Belfamy, Briory Far and Maryanne Stevens are among those exploring the distinctive qualities and enormous scale of Monet's last great works. With excerpts from

PICK OF THE DAY

THE UBIQUITOUS George Melly (triple) chats to the ailing Ian Dury about personal jazz favourites in a new series, Melly Talks Jazz (R2 10pm).

Nowadays, it's seen as one of the unassailable virtues of radio, if FOR - The Future of Radio (11.30pm R4) is anything to go by. This is a mélange of soundbites and archive clips which teeters on the brink of being an advertorial. The show nevertheless raises important questions about the impact of digital technology on the medium.



DOMINIC CAVENTISH

Monet's letters read by Paul Scofield, 9.25 A Breath of French Air. The famous trio by Poulenc and a light-hearted trio by Francis. Nicholas Daniel (oboe), Kim Walker (bassoon), Julius Drake (piano), (R), 10.00 Music Restored. Lucie Skeaping introduces a selection of music from Spain recorded last October at a Radio 3 invitation concert at the Royal Academy of Music in London. The programme includes Baroque harpsichord music by Cabanilles and Soler played by Sophie Yates, and songs and guitar music from the time of Goya by Fernando Sor and Federico Moreno Torroja performed by Rodrigo del Pozo (tenor) and Jakob Lindberg (guitar), 10.45 Night Waves. What is in a voice? While one 17th-century theorist believed the voice to be an expression of male sexual potency and a 20th-century theorist once called for revolt against 'phonetic consciousness', there is no doubt that the human voice is a complex, powerful and intensely personal phenomenon. Paul Allen explores a many-layered story of philosophy and feeling with Jonathan Rea, author of 'I See a Sense - A Philosophical History'. See *Pick of the Day*, 11.30 Jazz Notes, 12.00 Composer of the Week: Rimsky-Korsakov, (R), 1.00 - 6.00 Through the Night.

RADIO 4
(92.4-94.6MHz FM)
6.00 Today, 9.00 NEWS, In Our Time with Melvyn Bragg, 9.30 Transplantations, (R), 9.45 Serials: Iris, 10.00 NEWS, Woman's Hour, 11.00 NEWS, From Our Own Correspondent, 11.30 Old Dog and the Partridge, 12.00 NEWS, You and Yours, 12.57 Weather, 1.00 The World at One, 1.30 Hidden Treasures, 2.00 NEWS, The Archers, 2.15 Afternoon Play: A Slight Tilt to the Left, 3.00 NEWS, Call You and Yours: 0870 010 0444, 3.30 The Value of, (R), 3.45 This Sporting Life, (R), 4.00 NEWS, Law in Action, 4.30 The Material World, 5.00 PM, 5.57 Weather, 6.00 Six O'Clock News, 6.30 News, Minister, (R), 7.00 NEWS, The Archers, 7.25 Front Row, Francine Stock with the arts programme, 7.45 Lady Susan. Drama: 'Lady Susan' by Jane Austen, adapted by Lavina Murray, with Harriet Walter and Maggie Steeno (8/10), 8.00 NEWS, Case History. Prof Roy Porter reconsiders the performance of political figures of the 20th century, focusing on British PM Ramsay MacDonald and German president Hindenburg in the 1930s. MacDonald was suffering from depression, his eyesight and his mind were failing; Hindenburg had retired before the First World War and was now in his eighties. Were these men fit enough to meet the rise of Hitler? (R), 8.30 The Week in Westminster.

Boris Johnson of the Daily Telegraph takes a look behind the scenes at Westminster, 9.00 NEWS, Testbeds. Vanessa Collingridge explores the technologies that shape our lives, 9.30 In Our Time with Melvyn Bragg. Melvyn Bragg and guest discuss ideas and events which have influenced our time, 10.00 NEWS, The World Tonight, With Robin Lustig, 10.45 Book at Bedtime: Nana, Juliet Stevenson reads Emily Zola's novel (14/15), 11.00 NEWS, World of Pub. A four-part comedy by Tony Roche, 3: Doggy Phil, the man who has put a roller coaster in the bar, comes up with yet another scheme to improve the fortunes of Barry and Garry's pub. Special guest Edith Piaf, With Phil Cornwell, Alistair McGowan and John Thomson, 11.30 Experimental Feature: FOR - The Future of Radio. See *Pick of the Day*, 12.00 News, 12.30 The Late Book: Last Resort, 12.48 Shipping Forecast, 1.00 As World Service, 5.35 Shipping Forecast, 5.40 Inshore Forecast, 5.45 Prayer for the Day, 5.47 - 6.00 Farming Today.

RADIO 5 LIVE
(693.508kHz MW)
6.00 Breakfast, 6.00 Nicky Campbell, 12.00 The Midday News, 1.00 Ruscoe and Co, 4.00 Drive, 7.00 News Extra, 7.30 The Hardest Game. Continuing the series in which former BBC boxing correspondent Harry Carpenter reports on the sport from the 1950s to the present day, 8.00 Inside Edge. Rob Bonnet and the team investigate the issues that affect the sporting world, 9.00 Hoops. Fat Freddy M rounds up the latest news from the British basketball scene, 9.30 Sportsph. Tride Rawlinson presents the sports consumer programme, including sporting investigations and news of all the latest sporting gadgets, 10.00 Late Night Live. With Nick Robinson, Int 1030 Sport, 11.00 News, 11.5 The Financial World Tonight, 1.00 Up All Night, 5.00 - 6.00 Morning Reports.

CLASSIC FM
(100.0-101.9MHz FM)
6.00 Michael Mappin, 8.00 Henry Kelly, 12.00 Requests, 2.00 Concerto, 3.00 Jamie Cullum, 6.30 Newsnight, 7.00 Smooth Classics at Seven, 9.00 Evening Concert, 11.00 Alan Mann, 3.00 - 6.00 Mark Griffiths.

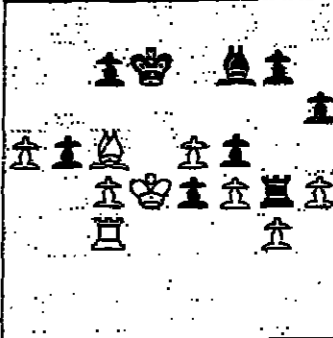
WORLD SERVICE RADIO
(198kHz LW)
1.00 The World Today, 1.30 Westway, 1.45 Performance, 2.00 The World Today, 2.30 Focus on Faith, 3.00 The World Today, 3.20 Sports Roundup, 3.30 World Business Report, 3.45 Insight, 4.00 - 7.00 The World Today (400-700).

TALK RADIO
(198kHz LW)
6.00 Big Boys Breakfast with David Banks & Nick Ferrari, 9.00 Scott Chisholm, 1.00 Anna Raeburn, 3.00 Peter Dealey, 5.00 The Sports Zone, 8.00 James Whale, 12.00 - 6.00 Ian Collins.

INDEPENDENT PURSUITS

CHESS

JON SPEELMAN



ON TUESDAY I discussed Panlof from Breda's sterling victory in the European Club Cup finals in Belgrade. This excellent event brought together no fewer than five players rated over 2,700 and 19 between 2,600 and 2,700, of the 57 who turned up for the eight teams.

In club chess, the players from each team are ranked in board order in approximately descending strength with the top boards facing each other, and so on down to the bottom. There were therefore a large number of heavyweight clashes in Belgrade, and one of the most intriguing was that between Alexei Shirov and Vladimir Kramnik - a continuation of their theoretical battle in their match in Cazorla last June.

Kramnik varied with 13...Bh4 from 13...Nxd2 14 Nxd2 Qd6 15 h3! with which Anand ultimately defeated him in Tilburg last November. 18...Nxe5 was a concession but if 18...Rxe5 19 f3 Nxd2 20 Bxd2 Rxe1+ 21 Rxe1 Bxh3 22 Bg5 Qh8 23 Re7 is very dangerous, eg 23...Rb8 24 Qe6+ Kh8 25 Rg7! Qxg7 (or 25...Kxg7 26 Bh6+ 26 Bf6 winning).

After carefully exchanging off a pair of rooks with Ral-c1-c2 and the queens, Shirov emerged with a safe extra pawn but plenty of work to convert it. The crisis came when he hurried with 44 a5! rather than allowing counterplay after 44 cxb5 45 Kramnik's 44...e3 looks rather panicky. Certainly if 44...Bxc4? 45 a6 Kc6 46 a7 Kb7 47 Rxc4! bxc4! 48 e6 Rg6 49 Ke5 wins. But 44...bxc4 isn't clear to me, eg 45 a6 Kc6 46 Ra3 Kb8 seems to defend since if 47 a7+ Ka8 the rook can't get to the b file in time - if 48 Ra4 Rxc3 threatens mate and 49 e6 Bxe6 50 Rb4 Rb3! still holds.

At the end 64...Rxa7 65 Rh7+ skewers king and rook.

White: Alexei Shirov
Black: Vladimir Kramnik
Petroff Defence

1 e4 e5	31 c4 Bf7
2 Nf3 Nf6	32 Re1 Rb6
3 Nxe5 d6	33 Kc5 Be8
4 Nf3 Nxe4	34 Be3 Rc6+
5 d4 d5	35 Kd5 Rg5
6 Bd3 Nc6	36 Bc5+ Kd7
7 0-0 Be7	37 Kc3 Bf7+
8 Re1 Bg4	38 Kd4 h6
9 c3 f5	39 a4 Rg4
10 Qb3 0-0	40 b5 axb5
11 Nbd2 Na5	41 a5! (see diagram) e3
12 Qa4 Nc6	42 Rxe3 g5
13 Bb5 Bh4	43 e6+ Bxe6
14 g3 Bf6	44 cxb5 gxf4
15 Bxc6 bxc6	45 Bxc6 Re8
16 Qxc6 Re8	46 gxf4 Rxf4+
17 Ne5 Bxe5	47 Ke5 Rc4
18 dxe5 Ng3	48 Rxd3+ Kc8
19 f4 Re6	49 Kxe6 Rxc5
20 Qc5 Ne4	50 Rxd3 Rc4
21 Nxe4 dxe4	51 Rxd5 Re4+
22 Be3 a6	52 Kd5 Rxd4
23 Qc4 Qd7	53 a6 Rxd4
24 Rael Rb8	54 Rb7+ Kd7
25 Rf2 Qf7	55 Rf7+ Kd8
26 Rde Rxd2	56 Rb7+ Kd7
27 Bxd2 Rb6	57 Ra8 Ra1
28 Qxf7+ Kxf7	58 a7 Rd1+
29 b4 Rc6	59 Kd1 Re1+
30 Kf2 Rf6	60 Kf3 Ra1
31 h4 Rc6	61 Kd4 Re1+
32 Ke3 Bh5	62 Kd5 cxb6
33 Kd4 Ke7	63 Rh8 1-0

POKER

DAVID SPANIER

HAVE YOU ever deliberately lost at poker? Why on earth? One answer might be: to keep the game going. If a big loser gets up, the game may break. So it pays, in theory, to keep the man in the game by letting him win a pot or two.

Chip Reese, regarded for years as just about the best all-round player in Las Vegas, offers a more surprising variant of this idea - risking a big loss on virtually the first hand of the night, to ensure the game develops as he wants. As he figures it, the longer the game goes on, the more mistakes his opponents are liable to make.

"I know who the guys are that are gonna win quickly and run away from the game. Who the guys are that are gonna be staying and playing... I know what people I'd rather see get ahead, and what people I'd rather see get behind.

"So what I try to do, I've even done it intentionally, like if I'm in a hand in a game early in a game, and say I've got the second-best hand in a game. And somebody's betting with the best hand, and somebody's in there with the worst hand, and I think I really shouldn't raise the pot. But my chances of winning are

much better than the guy I want to see get stuck. If I have to catch a card, I'm gonna win a big pot. I'm liable to put extra money early in a game, knowing it's mathematically the incorrect thing to do, just to punish this guy, to help him get stuck, 'cause it's gonna make a better game in the long run."

Interesting concept! I found all this in a new book out in the US, *Bad Bet* by Timothy L. O'Brien, a *New York Times* reporter. The book is a lively return of the gamut of commercial gambling in America - Las Vegas, Atlantic City, New Orleans, Connecticut... It covers casinos and their operators, sports betting, the Internet, economics and compulsive gambling, plus a bit on the side about poker. The long interview with Chip Reese is absorbing reading. If Reese has a problem (it seems to me, watching him at the table), it is compulsive eating. He has blown up like a blond balloon. This omission in the author's reportage is curious. And overall, he doesn't seem quite sure whether gambling is a good or a bad thing.

'Bad Bet', by Timothy L. O'Brien (Times Business, \$25)

SATELLITE AND CABLE

PICK OF THE DAY

IN THE PERIOD between 1985 and 1990, when *Back to the Future* trilogy and *Who Framed Roger Rabbit* were made, the movies of Robert Zemeckis (right) did the best box office in the world. His films garnered in excess of \$1 billion worldwide (during the same time, Steven Spielberg grossed a mere \$726 million). The secret of Zemeckis' success is that he never lets special effects overwhelm a good yarn. His mastery of story-telling

was underlined when his 1994 movie, *Forrest Gump*, scooped six Oscars. His work is the subject of *The Directors* (Inova Sky Premier).

No matter how often it is shown, *Fawley Towers* (9pm UK Gold) still has an uncanny ability to raise a laugh. It is the sheer amount that John Cleese and Connie Booth packed into each episode which really impresses. Remind yourself with a double-bill tonight.



JAMES RAMPTON

(7835565), 12.00 Skyreaper at Sea (555577), 1.00 The Nightingale (555577), 1.30 The Nightingale (555577), 2.00 Close, 3.00 ONE, 3.30 The Chris Evans Breakfast Show (7712), 4.30 Hollywood Squares (70518), 5.00 Sally Jessy Raphael (57955), 10.00 The Oprah Winfrey Show (7512), 11.00 Gullif (555577), 12.00 Jerry Jones (7555), 1.00 Ned about you (555577), 1.30 Jeopardy (2915), 2.00 Sally Jessy Raphael (53402), 3.00 Jerry Jones (5421), 4.00 Gullif (7058), 5.00 Star Trek: Deep Space Nine (4173), 6.00 Married with Children (5773), 6.30 Dream Team (5555), 7.00 The Simpsons (5555), 8.00 America's Dumbest Criminals (225), 8.30 World's Wildest TV (5053), 9.00 Friends (4112), 9.30 E R (5554), 10.30 Veronica's Closet (4711), 11.00 Dream Team (4754), 11.30 Star Trek: Deep Space Nine (7052), 12.30 NFL Football (5554), 1.30 - 2.00 Long Play (570539).

SKY SPORTS 1
2.00 Sky Sports Centre (525978), 2.55 World Wrestling Federation Shotgun (504792), 3.55 Sky Sports Centre (403771), 4.30 Racing News (4947), 5.00 American - Oz Style (5555), 5.30 Youth on Sky Sports (5755), 6.00 Waterports World (4142), 11.00 European Tour Golf Magazine (5255), 2.30 RingSide (5573), 4.00 Pool (5558), 5.00 World Wrestling Federation Superstars (5173), 6.00 Sky Sports Centre (7533), 6.30 Football League View (5555), 7.00 Futbol Mundial (7058), 7.30 European Tour Golf (50371), 10.00 Sky Sports Centre (5755), 10.45 Trans World Sport (49437), 11.45 Sky Sports Centre (5755), 12.30 Youth on Sky Sports (5555), 12.55 Football League Review (4943), 1.00 Futbol Mundial (2022), 1.30 Trans World Sport (7822), 2.30 What a Weekend (4800), 3.00 Sky Sports Centre (5755), 3.30 Close.

SKY SPORTS 2
6.30 World Wrestling Federation (224250), 7.00 Aerobics (42402), 7.30 Sky Sports Centre (525978), 7.55 Racing News (505752), 8.55 Unbelievable Sports (5755), 9.55 Sky Sports Centre (5755), 10.55 Fish TV Fishing Texas (5555), 11.55 Fish TV - Tony Dean Outdoors (7534), 12.55 Close.

SKY SPORTS 3
12.00 World Wrestling Federation Superstars (5558), 1.00 Fish TV Fishing Texas (5555), 1.30 Fish TV - Tony Dean Outdoors (7534), 2.00 Close.

EUROSPORT
7.30 Rally (5058), 8.00 Tennis (5044), 10.00 Alpine Skiing (5570), 11.00 Alpine Skiing (47559), 12.00 Tennis (5755980), 1.00 Football: Gazl Cup Galatasaray v Feyenoord (2515), 2.00 Boxing (5552), 3.00 Tennis (5555), 4.00 Car on Ice (4035), 1.30 Tini (7555), 12.30 Close.

UK GOLD
2.00 Crossroads (705783), 7.30 Neighbours (55402), 7.55 EastEnders (7755), 8.30 The Bill (537502), 9.00 The Bill (52404), 9.30 The House of Eliott (27347), 10.30 Rhoda (512228), 11.00 Dallas (5548063), 11.55 Neighbours (532771), 12.25 EastEnders (7535), 1.00 Juliet Bravo (403577), 2.00 Dallas (7535), 2.55 The Bill (52584), 3.25 The Bill (453808), 3.55 EastEnders (38771), 4.30 Rhoda (55888), 5.00 All Creatures Great and Small (125805), 6.00 Dynasty (48312), 7.00 2pmM Children (55734), 7.40 It Ain't Hot, Mum.

REGIONAL TELEVISION VARIATIONS

BBC1 N IRELAND
6.30 Newsline (630 773).

BBC1 SCOTLAND
As BBC1 LONDON & SE except: 2.55 Dotman (545159), 3.40 Daisychai Mor (Daisy Doherty) (570102), 6.30 Reporting Scotland: Weather (775).

BBC1 WALES
As BBC1 LONDON & SE except: 6.30 Wales Today (775).

ANGLIA
As Carlton except: 12.30 Anglia News and Weather (571053), 1.00 Save Your Bacon Country series in which Nash Brothers Nick and Mick tackle catering challenges around the region. They take on an international challenge from Russian and American students in Northampton and put a pair of Peterborough ice skaters in a spin with a rickshaw barbecue (5570), 3.30 Anglia News and Weather (275905), 5.30 Shortland Street (52594), 6.00 Home and Away (23588), 6.30 Anglia News (55702), 10.30 Anglia News and Weather (559053), 1.55 T in the Park (544644), 2.50 Box Office America (765544).

3.20 Cybernet (500973), 3.50 Murder, She Wrote (478356), 4.40 ITV Nightscreen (564445).

CENTRAL
As Carlton except: 12.30 Central News and Weather (571053), 1.00 Echo Point (5570), 3.20 Central News (275905), 5.30 Shortland Street (52594), 6.00 Home and Away (23588), 6.30 Central News and Weather (571053), 10.30 Central News and Weather (559053), 1.55 T in the Park (544644), 2.50 Box Office America (765544), 3.20 Cybernet (500973), 3.50 Murder, She Wrote (478356), 4.40 ITV Nightscreen (564445).

HTV WALES
As Carlton except: 12.30 This Morning (5478247), 12.45 HTV News (57553), 1.00 Shortland Street (5570), 3.20 HTV News (275905), 5.30 A Country Practice (52594), 6.00 Home and Away (23588), 6.30 HTV News (55702), 10.30 HTV News (559053), 1.55 T in the Park (544644), 2.50 Box Office America (765544), 3.20 Cybernet (500973), 3.50 Murder, She Wrote (478356), 4.40 ITV Nightscreen (564445).

In New Orleans (478356), 4.40 ITV Nightscreen (564445).

HTV WEST
As HTV Wales except: 6.25 HTV West News and Weather (571053), 6.30 The West Tonight and Weather (571053), 7.30 We Can Work It Out (553).

MERIDIAN
As Carlton except: 10.30 This Morning (5478247), 12.15 Meridian News and Weather (57553), 1.00 Shortland Street (5570), 3.20 Meridian News and Weather (275905), 5.30 Home and Away (23588), 6.00 Meridian News (55702), 10.30 Meridian News (559053), 1.55 T in the Park (544644), 2.50 Box Office America (765544), 3.20 Cybernet (500973), 3.50 Murder, She Wrote (478356), 4.40 ITV Nightscreen (564445).

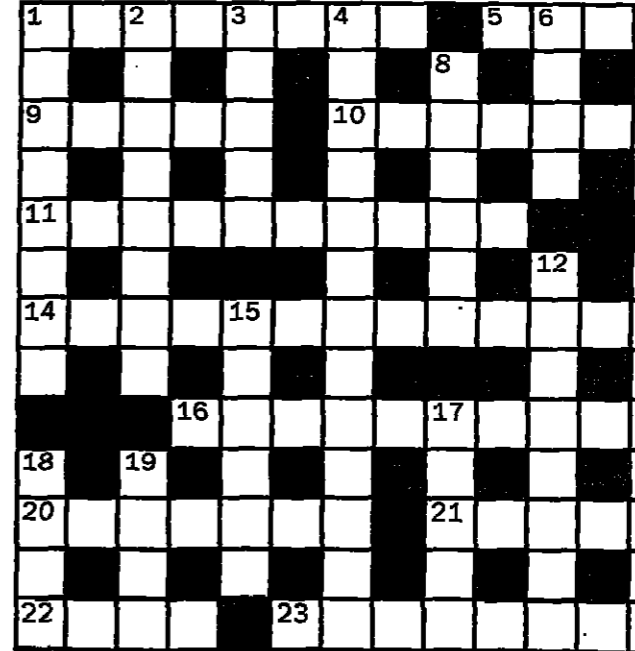
WESTCOUNTRY
As Carlton except: 10.30 This Morning (5478247), 12.15 Westcountry News (57553), 1.00 Emmerdale (5570), 3.20 Westcountry News (275905), 5.30 Westcountry News (559053), 1.55 T in the Park (544644), 2.50 Box Office America (765544), 3.20 Cybernet (500973), 3.50 Murder, She Wrote (478356), 4.40 ITV Nightscreen (564445).

YORKSHIRE
As Carlton except: 12.30 Calendar News and Weather (571053), 1.00 Emmerdale (5570), 3.20 Calendar News and Weather (275905), 5.40 News: (5537), 6.30 Tonight (541), 10.30 Calendar News and Weather (268880), 4.35 Jobfinder (555358).

TYNE TEES
As Yorkshire except: 12.30 North East News and Weather (571053), 3.20 North East News Headlines (275905), 5.55 North East Weather (54559), 6.00 North East Today (50505), 10.30 North East News and Weather (268880).

CONCISE CROSSWORD

No.3825 Thursday 21 January



- ACROSS**
- 1 Titled lady (8)
 - 2 Trigonometrical function (4)
 - 3 N African country (5)
 - 4 Become candidate for job (7)
 - 5 Slow rate of progress (6,4)
 - 6 Student (13)
 - 7 Cause to lose heart (10)
 - 8 Cocktail (7)
 - 9 Irish county (5)
 - 10 Call (4)
 - 11 Assemblies (8)
- DOWN**
- 1 Gigantic statue (8)
 - 2 Rebukes (8)
 - 3 Path (5)
 - 4 Unfair dealing (5,8)
 - 5 Bird sacred to ancient Egyptians (4)
 - 6 Current (4)
 - 7 Pungently flavoured (6)
 - 8 Holiday (8)
 - 9 Libens (8)
 - 10 Dried fruit (6)
 - 11 Disturbed (5)
 - 12 Sign (4)
 - 13 Cut hair etc (4)

Solution to yesterday's Concise Crossword:
ACROSS: 1 Pres, 4 Tor (Prest), 7 Kne, 8 Overland, 9 Fall accomplice, 10 Dry rot, 13 Resign, 15 Coconut slices, 19 Timeworn, 20 Land, 21 EE, 22 Tidy, DOWN: 1 Panda, 2 Electric, 3 Stole, 4 Tilly, 5 Wanting, 6 Detour, 11 Reverse, 12 Tawny, 14 Scholar, 16 Creel, 17 Tenet, 18 Early.

INDEPENDENT 1111

CONTRIBUTORS
HIGHLY
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BY THE
BBC

WBM GROUP
NOTICE 1991

THURSDAY TELEVISION

THE THURSDAY REVIEW
The Independent 21 January 1999



ROBERT HANKS TELEVISION REVIEW

AS A CHILD, I was scared of vampires. I don't know why this was. So far as I recall, I was too young at the time for the vampire craze to have come into the equation. I was a fan of the classic horror American comic books, which featured bits of extreme and terrifying violence, and I was never much bothered by ghost stories. But an issue of a Marvel comic called *Tomb of Dracula* gave me what I think was the only genuine nightmare of my life.

The thing that most unnerved me was the information that once you have invited a vampire into your house, he can come and go as he pleases, and there's not a thing you can do about it. But the other scary point about vampires was the sheer mathematics of it. I worked out that if a vampire fed once a night, and every one of the victims became a vampire, and all these new vampires fed every night, and so on, then it would be long before the entire world had been turned into vampires. It's a Fibonacci sequence - don't ever let anybody tell you that the maths you do at school has nothing to do with the real world.

Perhaps it's worth saying that I never actually believed in vampires, and now I'm all grown up they hardly bother me at all. But I still can't be altogether rational about them. I suppose this is why, despite knowing on one level that it is dreadful, I am a complete sucker for Buffy the Vampire Slayer (BBC2).

Buffy (Sarah Michelle Gellar) is an ordinary Californian high-school student, who also happens to be the descendant of a long line of vampire slayers and Buffy banded in that direction herself. Every week Buffy sorts out the evil, mainly bugged beings that besiege her home town, which, owing to black planning regulations, is built on the site of a centre of mystical convergence - a portal for demons to enter our world. To help her, she has her devoted, albeit male friend Xander, egged-on librarian Giles (thrusts a hereditary watcher's fire to advise and protect a slayer). The central joke is the discrepancy between Buffy's world-historical mission and

her Valley Girl language and values. Last night, Buffy fell for the new boy at school with an attractively antisocial manner - "the can breed for 40 minutes straight," somebody gasps - only to have their first date ruined by the appearance of the Anointed Warrior unveiled by the local vampire. She has a habit of spitting flanders by the way they dress. "Her fashion-sense screams predator." It's the shoulder pads. "It's perhaps not much of a joke, but it is manically underplayed, and the whole thing is wrapped up in about nine layers of insulating irony. Once you've got through all those, though, the core of *Buffy's* attraction is that it offers a basic, uncomplicated battle between cute, nicely dressed good and ugly, unsightly evil - and good always wins. *Buffy's* triumph is to present itself as knowing, smart and ironic, when really what it offers is reassurance: the vampire won't get you - they'll be called before they swamp the world.

Combined with its light internal logic, it is the way that *Buffy* always sticks to the rules of the game which makes it more winning than *The X-Files* (BBC1). I bet week was fun with *Millenium* and *Scary* on ironic filler, running up against terrible trash, *Buffy* with its basic, At one point, *Millenium* tried to defend itself from a mob of glowing-eyed madmen, by feebly brandishing a pair of baguettes in the form of a cross. Last night, though, we were back in the territory of black oil, neck implants and the grand alien conspiracy theory (don't worry if you don't grasp the relevance, understanding *The X-Files* is the sign of a misbegotten youth).

The best fantasies are the ones which follow through their own reasoning. The readiness of *The X-Files* to give house room to any brand of the supernatural can get in its conspiracy mode, enjoying it because a matter of suspending not simply disbelief but all critical faculties. In that sense, it is a fundamentally cynical programme. *Buffy* may try to snarl like a dark girl from a newly opened tomb, but next to this, it's a breath of fresh air.

BBC1

- 6.00 **Business Breakfast** (22:55), 7.00 **News** (7:00), 7.15, 8.00 **Kitty** (S) (7:40), 8.15 **News**, 8.30 **The News Show** (S) (7:45), 8.45 **News**, 9.00 **Regional News**, 9.15 **News**, 9.30 **Cartoon**, 9.45 **News**, 10.00 **Home Farm** (S) (7:45), 10.15 **News**, 10.30 **Cartoon**, 10.45 **News**, 11.00 **Home Farm** (S) (7:45), 11.15 **News**, 11.30 **Cartoon**, 11.45 **News**, 12.00 **Home Farm** (S) (7:45), 12.15 **News**, 12.30 **Cartoon**, 12.45 **News**, 1.00 **Home Farm** (S) (7:45), 1.15 **News**, 1.30 **Cartoon**, 1.45 **News**, 2.00 **Home Farm** (S) (7:45), 2.15 **News**, 2.30 **Cartoon**, 2.45 **News**, 3.00 **Home Farm** (S) (7:45), 3.15 **News**, 3.30 **Cartoon**, 3.45 **News**, 4.00 **Home Farm** (S) (7:45), 4.15 **News**, 4.30 **Cartoon**, 4.45 **News**, 5.00 **Home Farm** (S) (7:45), 5.15 **News**, 5.30 **Cartoon**, 5.45 **News**, 6.00 **Home Farm** (S) (7:45), 6.15 **News**, 6.30 **Cartoon**, 6.45 **News**, 7.00 **Home Farm** (S) (7:45), 7.15 **News**, 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14/APPOINTMENTS SENIOR, UNIVERSITIES, RESEARCH

INSTITUTE OF EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY

Temporary Research Assistant/Research Fellow in Healthcare/Nursing Informatics

(12 Months, half-time)
Applications are invited for a temporary Research Assistant/Research Fellow post in the Institute of Educational Technology to work on an Open University Research Development funded project in the area of information technology in healthcare/nursing. This project will investigate the access to and use of information and communication technology by nurses working in primary care. You will undertake empirical research, and will be involved in qualitative and quantitative data collection and data analysis. Interest Group members of the IIE2000 (Healthcare Informatics in Education) (conjoint bodies), Peter Murray and Gill Redhead.

Applicants for the Research Fellow post should have a PhD/DPHil or equivalent experience in research areas such as information technology and healthcare/nursing, whilst applicants for the Research Assistant post should have a good first or master's degree also in relevant areas such as information technology and healthcare/nursing. The post is available from 1st March 1999 or as soon as possible thereafter. Appointment will be on a half-time basis for 12 months.

Salary will be on the Research Fellow scale, grade 1A £15,735 - £23,451 p.a. or Research Assistant scale, grade 1B £11,735 - £17,570 p.a. depending on experience and qualifications. Initial salary will not exceed £17,570 p.a.

An application form, further particulars and access details for disabled applicants are available from Mrs Paul Cross on 01908 654901 (01908) 652916 e-mail: P.E.Cross@open.ac.uk There is a 24 hour voicemail service available on Milton Keynes (01908) 654127.

Closing date for applications: 9 February 1999.
Interview date: 23 February 1999.

Disabled applicants whose skills and experience meet the requirements of the job will be interviewed. Please let us know if you need your copy of the further particulars in large print, on computer disk, or on audio cassette tape. Hearing impaired persons may make enquiries on Milton Keynes (01908) 654901 (Minicom answerphone).
Equal Opportunity is University Policy.
http://www2.open.ac.uk/personal/emp/pj.htm

Y BRIFFSGOL AGORED Deputy Regional Director, Welsh Regional Centre

Applications are invited for the post of Deputy Regional Director based in the Welsh Regional Centre in Cardiff.
The Deputy Regional Director is responsible to the Welsh Director and through her to the University's Director of Student Services. The Deputy Regional Director will be responsible for the overall efficient running of the Welsh Regional Centre and will have strong skills and experience in policy implementation and the management of change, administration, personnel and budgets. The post also involves deputising for the Regional Director in representative roles within the University and the Welsh Region for which an understanding of the OU's aims within the broader educational context will be needed.

The appointment, which is to be made as soon as possible, will be on Academic Related Terms and Conditions Grade D5 £30,496 - £34,464 p.a.

Application forms, further particulars and access details for disabled applicants are available from the Staff Support Team, Student Services Planning Office, The Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes MK7 6AA. Telephone Milton Keynes (01908) 858251, 24 hour Recruitment Line Milton Keynes (01908) 655062.

Closing date for applications: 12 February 1999.

Disabled applicants whose skills and experience meet the requirements of the job will be interviewed. Please let us know if you need your copy of the further particulars in large print, on computer disk, or on audio cassette tape. Hearing impaired persons may make enquiries on Milton Keynes (01908) 654901 (Minicom answerphone).
Equal Opportunity is University Policy.
http://www2.open.ac.uk/personal/emp/pj.htm



GENERAL MANAGER

The Open University Students Association (OUSA) is the organisation which represents more than 150,000 Open University students studying at a distance. OUSA is seeking a new General Manager who will be responsible for the administration of the organisation, advising the elected student Executive Committee and supporting the membership.

This is a challenging role in a period of rapid educational and technological change. In order to represent its members effectively and provide the support and services the membership will require OUSA to meet these challenges. OUSA is therefore looking for someone with knowledge of working in a democratic membership organisation with a knowledge of higher education, more particularly the part-time sector.

Appointments will be made on the Academic Related Grade 5 scale £30,496 - £34,464 p.a. depending on qualifications and experience.

An application form and further particulars, and access details for disabled applicants, are available from Amanda Goldsmith, The Open University Students Association, P.O. Box 397, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes MK7 6AA or telephone Milton Keynes (01908) 653024.

Closing date for applications: 9 February 1999.

Disabled applicants whose skills and experience meet the requirements of the job will be interviewed. Please let us know if you need your copy of the further particulars in large print, on computer disk, or on audio cassette tape. Hearing impaired persons may make enquiries on Milton Keynes (01908) 654901 (Minicom answerphone).

Equal Opportunity is University Policy.
http://www2.open.ac.uk/personal/emp/pj.htm



University of London EXTERNAL & INTERNAL STUDENT ADMINISTRATION DIVISION (EISA) SENIOR DESPATCH OFFICER

£15,074 + £2,194 LW
A self-starter, with an organised approach, is required to undertake the duties of this new position in the External & Internal Student Administration Division (EISA) of the University of London. The post involves the personal, direct and active involvement of the postholder in a significant degree of heavy lifting, which is undertaken - it is necessary to have such special equipment as appropriate and experience in managing a large volume of work. Previous supervisory experience is essential, as the postholder will be responsible for the daily planning, direction and control of the work of two Despatch Officers, plus seasonal staff such as to ensure all despatch deadlines are met.

The successful candidate will be a highly motivated individual with good communication and team building skills, previous experience of working in a busy office and the ability to prioritise a changing workload. The postholder will also be able to work effectively to tight deadlines, often under considerable time pressure. The postholder will also be responsible for the heavy lifting, which is undertaken - it is necessary to have such special equipment as appropriate and experience in managing a large volume of work.

For an application form and further particulars, please contact Personnel Office, Room 218, Senate House, Malet Street, London WC1E 7HU. Fax 0171 662 8081. Tel 0171 358 3974 (dedicated 24 hour answerphone). Email: recruiting@uol.ac.uk quoting Ref: 654901.

Closing date: Monday 1 February 1999.

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Senate House operates a No Smoking Policy

Applicants should send their applications to: The Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes MK7 6AA. Telephone Milton Keynes (01908) 858251, 24 hour Recruitment Line Milton Keynes (01908) 655062.

SCHOOL OF MECHANICAL AND OFFSHORE ENGINEERING LECTURER IN MECHANICAL ENGINEERING (DYNAMICS, MECHANICS AND MANUFACTURING)

(FIXED TERM 36 MONTHS) (REF T048/1)
You will be required to teach on the School's portfolio of BSc (Eng), BEng, MEng, and MSc courses and to participate in the School's rapidly expanding range of research and other professional activities.

You must possess a good honours degree, or equivalent in mechanical engineering at a related discipline in mechanical engineering of a related discipline and have a minimum of 3 years' experience in an academic, industrial or research environment. A higher degree by research would be a distinct advantage.
£15,946 - £20,820

For an application form and further particulars, please contact: The Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes MK7 6AA. Telephone Milton Keynes (01908) 858251, 24 hour Recruitment Line Milton Keynes (01908) 655062.

Closing date: 4 February 1999.

Applicants should send their applications to: The Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes MK7 6AA. Telephone Milton Keynes (01908) 858251, 24 hour Recruitment Line Milton Keynes (01908) 655062.

LAMBETH EDUCATION KEYS TO LEARNING PARTNERSHIP Single Regeneration Budget Round 4

Lambeth has been successful in winning funds from the Government for an ambitious programme to raise educational standards across the whole Borough.

We are also now aiming to complete the team and appoint a manager. We need a committed successful manager with experience of project management.

INTEGRATED LEARNING SYSTEMS (POT)

£34,116 - £36,132 (incl. LWA)
We are planning to introduce Integrated Learning Systems into every maintained school in the Borough over the next three years and we need a professional with experience of ILS to manage this £2m project.

For further information please contact
Phyllis Duripace Secondary Adviser on:
0171 928 8164, and for an application form please write to Yvonne Lavelle
Administration Assistant,
Lambeth Education Business Partnership,
Lawn Lane Centre, Lawn Lane,
Vauxhall SW8 1TU

Lambeth aims for quality service and equal opportunities for all.

The closing date for completed application forms is
Friday 5th February 1999

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE Department of Chemistry Technical Officer (Electronics)

We are seeking a qualified person to take the initiative in the Department for developing and introducing novel electronic systems, particularly interfaces used in teaching and research, and where suitable systems are not available commercially, and to organise training in modern electronic techniques for postgraduate chemistry students. He/she will be directly responsible to the Head of Physical Chemistry, although some work on other branches of Chemistry will be expected.

A professional qualification in electronics and several years of experience in instrument design is essential. The post is available from May 1999 for five years. Salary will be on the University Scale in the range £17,270 to £21,815, according to age and experience.

Applications (two copies with curriculum vitae and the names and addresses of two referees should be sent by 15th February 1999 to Dr R. N. Jones, Department of Chemistry, Lensfield Road, Cambridge CB2 1EW, from whom further information may be obtained. A detailed description of the Department is available on the World Wide Web (<http://www.chem.cam.ac.uk>).

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THE INDEPENDENT

FAX: 0171 293 2505

VIEW FROM HERE

Leave the money on the stump



PETER SCOTT

Too much centralised decision making, however progressively inclined it is, will only inhibit creativity and diminish diversity

Letter from the Department for Education and Employment to the Higher Education Funding Council for England, telling the HEFCE how it should tell universities to spend the extra money made available by the Government, was greeted through the line by the Secretary of State, David Blunkett. True or false, members of the HEFCE board were left with the impression that they had no choice but to earmark the grant in ways prescribed by the Government.

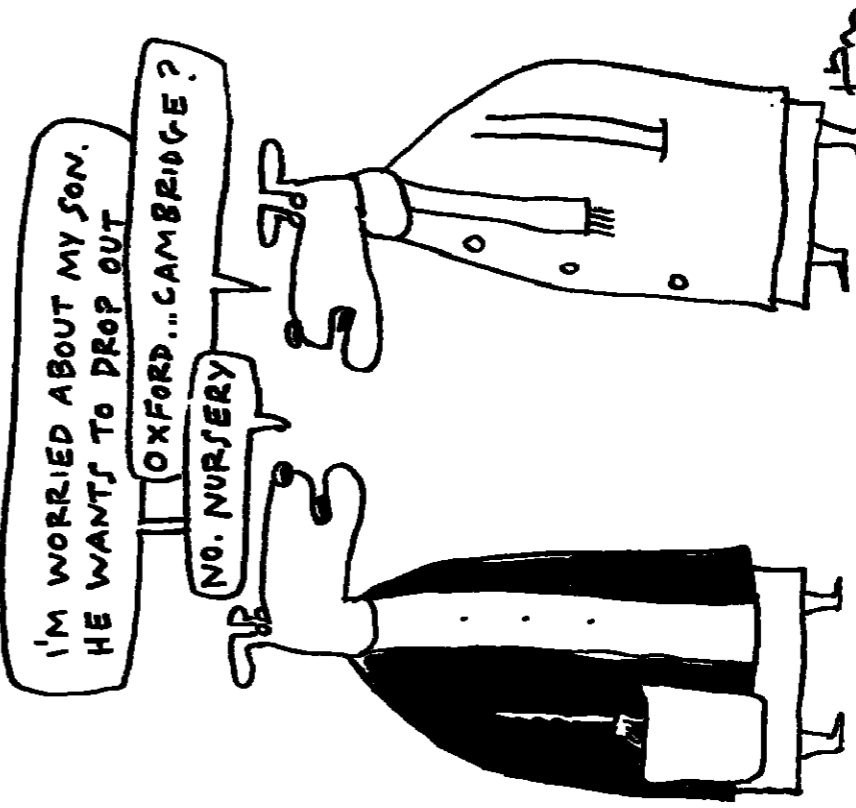
Does it matter that universities are no longer free to spend their money without political interference? No and Yes. No, because as great national institutions, universities should serve national purposes. They should be capable of making a proper contribution to achieving the Government's goal of a "Learning Age"; they should be encouraged to reach out to disadvantaged individuals and social groups excluded from higher education in the past; they should be required to maintain high academic standards and make their courses relevant to contemporary needs; and they should be accountable for the - now very large - sums of public money they receive.

Yes, because too much centralised decision making, however progressively inclined, will inhibit creativity and diminish diversity. Karl Popper warned long ago in *The Poverty of Historicism* that "it is easy to centralise power; but impossible to centralise all that knowledge which is distributed across many individual minds, and whose centralisation would be necessary for the wise

wielding of centralised power". In the present age of "initialism" and earmarked funding, the cracks have all been filled in where "university" creativity flourished. But there is another worry. As the old autonomy - or irresponsibility - of the universities has shrunk, the effect has not only been to inject political priorities into university funding (which I support) but also to politicise the rival claims among universities (which I don't).

A good example is the aftermath of the Government's decision to abolish Oxford and Cambridge colleges fees. Blatant lobbying has forced the Government to give Oxford and Cambridge most of the money back. Perhaps as a result of this politicisation of university

HAM



FAX: 0171 293 2505

THE INDEPENDENT
Thursday 21 January 1999

unapplied joy would pass

4/EDUCATION

Play fantasy league academia

'New' universities have a problem: some people think that they're no good. But watch out - these places are aiming for the top of the table.
By Chris Barton

When my boozing pals cheer at Crewe Alexandra's position in the First Division (bottom), my opinion is limited: there's no arguing the loss with a football League Table. Trouble is, my fellow proper-supper think - that there is a University League Table as well. That was because some of the papers first this one, thank God, keep publishing something they call "University League Table". Fantasy sport in it. What is so interesting if you're sure you don't mind not understanding it like this, in the same of us are getting mad points for teaching even though the tables from the assessment body in question have yet to turn up on our terrace.

Of course, there aren't any new universities as good as Cambridge yet. It would be a scandal - for Cambridge - if there were, given the fact it's had what we are doing, in double-quick time, is closing the gap to serve those who weren't part of the alternative, if inaccrue only 18-year-olds were involved "top 2 per cent" of yesterday.

For most of my working life, the world has laughed at British industry while heading a path to its higher education system - which, ironically, has only recently expanded sufficiently to serve its home market. Its 1986/87 there were nearly 1.1 million students in the UK's 120 higher education institutions. Scarcely, the Higher Education Statistics Agency declines to give a sub-total for the "new" (i.e. post-1992) universities, because of the mergers that have subsequently taken place across the old divide. Come to that, neither do they bother, looking up the numbers in the old university colleges (as they were until the 1990s), or the colleges of advanced technology (until the 1990s).



The 'new' universities are scoring highly in standards, numbers and diversity, and are not happy about being seen as second division

pace of payments, but no longer denying places to our own people. Only two things matter: how many universities do we need to serve the number of people capable of benefiting from them; and how good that service is. As regards the number, we need a few more yet. Our schools still create finding out what each child is good at, we've got lots of people in the workforce who want to better themselves, a growing skilled population, and a lot of people, like those living in Cornwall for example, with no university within easy travelling distance. Good service? Why not ask the present generation of, say, lawyers who probably completed the post-graduate stage of their education at one of the "new" universities whose unique tradition of rigorous course validation

THE INDEPENDENT
Thursday 21 January 1999

!MOU

13/APPOINTMENTS SENIOR, UNIVERSITIES, RESEARCH

Senior Lecturer and Lecturer in Knowledge Management

The Open University Business School is one of Europe's largest providers of management education, offering Professional Certificate, Diploma and MBA qualifications. More than 25,000 students are taking our courses in the UK, the rest of Europe and in many other countries. New developments include further international programmes, undergraduate-level business studies, specialist master's degrees and new courses in accountancy.

Research is supported by substantial external grants, including from the ESRC, EU, The Design Council, and a wide range of private sector organisations. The School was assessed in the HEFCE Research Assessment Exercise for the first time in 1996 and achieved a 3a rating. Research has subsequently grown substantially. The School gained an excellent rating in the first HEFCE teaching quality assessment, the Investor in People status and gained the Queen's Award for Export Achievement in 1997.

These two posts are in the field of knowledge management, which we acknowledge is a broad and developing area. An MBA course 'Managing Knowledge' is currently under development, and includes communications, sense-making, intellectual capital measurement, intellectual property rights, knowledge assets, learning, knowledge creation, innovation, human resources, and knowledge management practice. The course uses and critically explores the technologies and media that support knowledge processes, including groupware, interactive CD-ROMs and the web. The OUBS also hosts the Management of Knowledge and Innovation Research Unit (MKIRU) which has a number of research projects in the area.

You will join the Centre for Innovation and Innovation and will contribute to the substantial research activity in this field and to teaching across the School's programmes of Certificate, Diploma, MBA and undergraduate levels. You should have good academic qualifications in a relevant field of management, proven teaching and research capability, the ability to manage projects and programmes, an enthusiastic interest in developing distance learning methods for managers from a wide range of backgrounds, a thorough grasp of current developments in management education and the ability to conduct research.

The posts are permanent, on the Lecturer A scale £16,655 - £21,815 or on the Lecturer B scale £12,776 - £19,046 per annum, on the Senior Lecturer scale £30,946 - £38,464 per annum according to qualifications and experience.

To obtain an application package and access details for disabled applicants please contact The School Office, Open University Business School, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes MK7 6AA or telephone Milton Keynes (01908) 652965, fax (01908) 655898, e-mail: OUBS-Recruitment@open.ac.uk. Please quote reference Post 9900 and name of publication where the advert was seen. Visit our website at <http://www.open.ac.uk>

Closing date for applications: 16 February 1999.
Interviews will be held on: 24 March 1999.

Disabled applicants whose skills and experience meet the requirements of the job will be interviewed. Please let us know if you need your copy of the further particulars in large print, on computer disk, or on audio cassette tape. Hearing impaired persons may make enquiries on Milton Keynes (01908) 654901 (Milton Keynes answerphone). Equal Opportunity is University Policy.

<http://www2.open.ac.uk/personal/omp/jahim>

IMPERIAL COLLEGE OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & MEDICINE

Department of Computing Research Assistant

Imperial College Parallel Computing Centre (ICPCC) has a vacancy for a Research Assistant on a two-year EEC funded research project on software infrastructure for delivering high performance solutions on the Internet. This is a collaborative project with the various industrial partners in Europe. The responsibility of the research assistant is to develop a Java-based advanced visualisation system for a Web enabled distributed data mining environment. There are approximately 20 members in the ICPCC consisting of academics, research assistants and research students (<http://icpp.doc.ic.ac.uk>). The project will be carried out by the data mining group of the Centre (<http://rudy.doc.ic.ac.uk>).

The appointment will be on the RA1B scale (£17,869 - £19,704 inclusive of London Allowance) depending on qualifications and experience. Applicants should have a good postgraduate degree in computing and at least 2 years' experience of Java software development. Experience in Java 3D and Swing programming and knowledge of data visualisation will be an advantage.

Applications, including a full CV with names and addresses of three referees, should be sent to: Mrs Susan Brookes, Administrative Assistant, Imperial College Parallel Computing Centre, Department of Computing, 180 Queen's Gate, London SW7 2BZ. Closing date: 5 February 1999
The College is striving towards Equal Opportunities

TEL: 0171 293 2222

21 JANUARY 1999

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MANAGER, LONDON & SOUTH-EAST (THREE YEAR POST)

Applications are invited for the post of Business Development Manager, London & South-East. To be successful in this challenging role, you will need the following experience and attributes:

- Proven sales ability to achieve targets, preferably in the management development areas.
- Knowledge of human resource strategies.
- Ability to communicate and present to high levels of decision-makers.
- A team worker who is goal oriented to achieve targets, and able to work autonomously whilst managing own area.
- Familiar with the territory and located within the area.

This is an exciting and dynamic environment with constant growth and development of new curriculum and technology since the School's inception fifteen years ago. The School is moving into greater diversification towards the Millennium and needs people to help grow their business.

The Open University Business School is one of Europe's largest providers of management education. It is a Faculty of the Open University, offering Professional Certificate, Diploma and MBA qualifications. All the courses are offered by distance learning, with high quality materials supported by a network of local tutorial and counselling staff. More than 25,000 students are taking the School's courses in the UK, the rest of Europe and other international countries.

The Business Development Manager will be part of the Corporate Business Team. Home based and covering a geographic area, you will be responsible for the development of sales to organisations sponsoring employees on our courses. You will be supported by central teams who will provide leads and key account management. The goal is for three years. Salary will be c. £24,000 plus performance bonuses; a car will be provided.

To obtain an application package and access details for disabled applicants please contact The School Office, Open University Business School, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes MK7 6AA or telephone Milton Keynes (01908) 652965, fax (01908) 655898, e-mail: OUBS-Recruitment@open.ac.uk. Please quote reference Post 9900 and name of publication where the advert was seen. Visit our website at <http://www.open.ac.uk>

Closing date for applications: 5 February 1999.
Interviews will be held on: 19 February 1999.

Disabled applicants whose skills and experience meet the requirements of the job will be interviewed. Please let us know if you need your copy of the further particulars in large print, on computer disk, or on audio cassette tape. Hearing impaired persons may make enquiries on Milton Keynes (01908) 654901 (Milton Keynes answerphone). Equal Opportunity is University Policy.

<http://www2.open.ac.uk/personal/omp/jahim>

The University of Reading

Department of Soil Science NERC Environmental Diagnostics Programme Spatial Variability and Pesticide Leaching Research Fellow

Applications are invited for a 3-year NERC-funded postdoctoral Research Fellowship in the Department of Soil Science. Salary in range £15,735 to £17,570 per annum. The appointee will be responsible for co-ordinating field studies of pesticide fate involving measurements of adsorption, degradation and movement, and their spatial variability. A major part of the work will involve coupling models of pesticide leaching with models of spatial variability. Please quote Reference R9887.

2 Research Studentships
Post 1
Measurement and modelling of sorption and degradation of pesticides in relation to soil properties (in collaboration with Dr Allen Walker, Horticulture Research International).
Post 2
Measurement and modelling of the hydrodynamic aspects of pesticide leaching (in collaboration with Zeneca Agrochemicals and the Institute of Hydrology). Please quote Reference R9888.

For informal enquiries contact: Mrs Sue Hawthorn on 0118 931 8911, e-mail: s.m.hawthorn@reading.ac.uk. Application forms and further particulars available from Personnel Office, The University of Reading, Whiteknights, PO Box 217, Reading RG6 6AH, Tel. 0118 931 6771. Closing date for applications: 12 February 1999. Please quote the appropriate reference number.

FAX: 0171 293 2505

advertisements on these pages, remember to mention that you saw THE INDEPENDENT

now!

Bad places for children

WORD OF MOUTH
JOHN IZBICKI

Child casualties
When Norman St John-Stevens first drowned up the Assisted Places Scheme (APS) some 20 years ago, the noble lord he was created Lord St John of Fawley in 1987, could not foresee the nightmares ahead. It was meant to give thousands of bright children from working-class homes the chance of a free education at some of the country's top independent schools. No one seemed capable of turning our state schools into havens for high flyers, and the APS was seen as one way of rescuing children who might otherwise fall by the wayside. Direct grant schools - APS's predecessors - had already been axed by Shirley Williams (now also in the Upper House) when she wore her Labour hat.

So what has happened since the present lot decided to phase out assisted places? Here's just one example. Two single-sex schools - King Edward VII School for Boys and Queen Mary's School (girls) - both in Lytham (just a sea breeze from Blackpool) and both former direct grant schools, are to merge this year. Half their 1,000 pupils are on assisted places. The last of them having entered in 1997. The schools will feel the pinch when APS ends as only 10 per cent of parents could afford the full fee of £4,400 a year. John Bennett, the chairman of governors, admitted there would have to be staff redundancies. "We're already six down (out of a total staff of 87) but will try to do it by natural wastage, post-freezing and the like. We're determined to keep the same pupil-teacher ratio when our numbers drop."

Negotiations are going ahead to make the transition as gentle as possible. But some pain cannot be avoided. There'll be only one head of department when departments merge. And I suspect there'll be only one headteacher. Existing pupils will work their way through the school in single sex classes, but the Lower VI will go co-ed from September. What a pity politics drags the carpet of opportunity from under the feet of bright children. Now if only our Tony had invented the APS instead of Norman.

Taste of summer
Now here's something that has really taken off. In 1991, some bright spark at the University of London gave birth to a project for young sixth formers to "taste" university life. Courses lasting anything from a day to a week were made available to youngsters at some of the university's colleges. No cheeky recruiting drive, this. What's more, it's all free. That, if I may say so, is the way to earn yourself.

Each year more and more colleges joined the scheme - and even universities outside London University eagerly jumped on the bandwagon. This year courses are available at 23 institutions. Newcomers include Birkbeck



also-runs
Bradley Ormesher

rigours of sociology. Sadly, drearily, it actually takes some time, effort and expertise to evaluate degree courses. First you need to read pages of course proposals, syllabi, booklists, assessment regulations and tutor curriculum vitae. Then, ultimately, you might even have a look at how their graduates do subsequently: always provided they manage to get jobs after their education has been condemned, sight unseen.

Still not convinced? Then come to one of our open days for undergraduates courses. They're better than those at the "oldies" universities. They have to be. We don't take you for granted.

The writer is Professor of Family Law at Staffordshire University and Director of the Centre for the Study of the Family, Law and Social Policy

To advertise in this section please call Jackie Walsh on 0171 293 2054 or John Timms on 0171 293 2035.

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION: CENTRE FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING
Lectureship in Developmental Psychology
The Open University is Europe's largest provider of university level courses in Psychology. Based within the School of Education and with strong links with the Psychology Discipline, the Centre for Human Development and Learning provides and supports developmental psychology courses at undergraduate, masters and doctoral level from year 1 to year 4 over 3,500 students.
The School of Education joined a 4 in the last 10 years. The Centre for Human Development and Learning has research strengths in a number of areas including the development of children with special needs, literacy, socio-cultural studies of child development and learning, and applied international childhood studies.
We are looking for a developmental psychologist with an established or developing track record in research and publications, an enthusiasm for distance teaching and an established or developing track record in research and publications, and an ability to contribute to the development of the Centre for Human Development and Learning. You should have good communication and writing skills and an interest in the use of new technologies to deliver courses through supported open learning. You would be expected to contribute to the presentation and future production of courses concerned with the psychological development of children.
We can offer you excellent support for developing and extending your own research, including generous study leave, funding for conferences, equipment and research assistance.
This permanent post is available from 1 April 1999, or as soon as possible thereafter, and will be based within the School of Education at Milton Keynes. Salary will be an either the Lectureship Salary Scale £16,655 - £21,915 per annum or the Lectureship Salary Scale £22,726 - £29,040 per annum depending on experience and qualifications.
Applications forms, further particulars and access details for disabled applicants are available from the Assistant Secretary, School of Education, The Open University, Milton Keynes MK7 6AA, telephone Milton Keynes (01908) 653148 or e-mail education-recruitment@open.ac.uk
Closing date for applications: 12 February 1999.

TEMPORARY LECTURESHIP IN LITERATURE
This temporary post, based in Milton Keynes, is available for four years from 1 May 1999. You will have a proven ability to teach effectively and will be prepared to work collaboratively within the Department and the Faculty of Arts. You will be a specialist in 19th century literature with an interdisciplinary interest. A good research record and an active programme of ongoing research are essential. An ability to contribute to one or more of the Department's current research areas is desirable. These are: Colonial and Post-Colonial Literatures in English, and Black History and Bibliography.
Appointments will be made on the Lectureship Salary Scale £16,655 - £21,915 per annum or on the Lectureship Salary Scale £22,726 - £29,040 per annum, according to experience and qualifications.
Further particulars and application forms are available from Mrs. Let Lindop, Faculty of Arts, The Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes MK7 6AA. Telephone Milton Keynes (01908) 653370 (this is a 24 hour answering service). E-mail: arts-recruitment@open.ac.uk
Access details for disabled applicants may be obtained by contacting Cheryl O'Toole on Milton Keynes (01908) 653962.
Closing date for applications: 8 February 1999.
Disabled applicants whose skills and experience meet the requirements of the job will be interviewed. Please let us know if you need your copy of the further particulars in large print, on computer disk, or on audio cassette tape. Hearing impaired persons may make enquiries on Milton Keynes (01908) 654901 (Minicom answerphone).
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http://www2.open.ac.uk/personnel/emp/pn.htm

online
www.independent.co.uk
THE INDEPENDENT

**SCHOOL OF CIVIL ENGINEERING
COMPUTER-AIDED
ENGINEERING GROUP
SENIOR RESEARCH FELLOW**
An experienced specialist in information technology is required, initially for a fixed period of 28 months, to work on the major European R&D project. This challenging project is concerned with the application of IT within the Large Scale Engineering construction industry.
You should have a good first degree in either Civil Engineering or an appropriate Computer related subject together with complementary qualifications. The position will involve experience in the application of IT to the design and analysis of structures, and the use of IT in the design and analysis of structures. The position will involve experience in the application of IT to the design and analysis of structures, and the use of IT in the design and analysis of structures.
You must have a good first degree in either Civil Engineering or an appropriate Computer related subject together with complementary qualifications. The position will involve experience in the application of IT to the design and analysis of structures, and the use of IT in the design and analysis of structures.
Salary: Research III £27,515 - £34,464 p.a. according to qualifications and relevant experience.
Information enquiries about the post may be made to Dr. Alastair Watson (a.watson@leeds.ac.uk) on 0113 233 2314.
Application forms and further particulars may be obtained by tele: 0113 233 2302 (the Civil Engineering Research Institute), fax: 0113 233 2343 (addressed to Sally Worthington, School of Civil Engineering, University of Leeds, Leeds, LS2 9JT), or email: s.worthington@leeds.ac.uk
Job ref: 064-100-004-023.
Closing date: 12 February 1999.
Minicom answerphone, tel: 0113 233 4353.

OPERATIONS
We are looking for three others to join the University's Operations team. Each post is offered on a full-time, temporary basis for 24 months. Those appointed will work on distance learning materials in faculty-based editorial groups. We also welcome applications from candidates interested in job-sharing.
Editor - Arts Faculty (Post No: 10549)
You will work initially on the Arts Faculty's undergraduate programme. The Arts Faculty has academic departments in Art History, Classics, History, History of Science, Literature, Music, Philosophy and Religious Studies offering both single-discipline and interdisciplinary courses.
Editor - Centre for Higher Education Practice (Post No: 10548)
You will work initially on the Centre's developing programme which leads to the award of a Postgraduate Certificate in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education.
Editor - School of Education (Post No: 10547)
You will work initially on the School's leading Schools Programme. This project is based on a government initiative which links all schools to the internet. It will provide training and support to expand the use of information and communications technology in the curriculum for all teachers.
To apply for these posts, you would be expected to hold a qualification at degree level or equivalent. You must have at least three years' sound editing experience (preferably in education or related publishing) and be familiar with production processes. You should also be willing and able to use our electronic publishing systems, although training and support on the specific equipment and software will be provided.
We expect these interviews for the job to have formed some acquaintance with the Open University's distance learning methods and materials.
The posts are initially for 24 months and the post-holders will be located at the University's headquarters in Milton Keynes. The appointments will be made at an appropriate point on the academic-related staff scale Grade 2 £18,275 - £23,451 p.a.
Application forms and further particulars (please state which post number) can be obtained from Lesley Adams, Publishing Services, The Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes, MK7 6AA or telephone Milton Keynes (01908) 653277 or (01908) 653301.
After hours there is a 24 hour answering service on Milton Keynes (01908) 653435.
Closing date for applications: 8 February 1999.
Disabled applicants whose skills and experience meet the requirements of the job will be interviewed. Please let us know if you need your copy of the further particulars in large print, on computer disk, or on audio cassette tape. Hearing impaired persons may make enquiries on Milton Keynes (01908) 654901 (Minicom answerphone).
Equal Opportunity is University Policy.
http://www2.open.ac.uk/personnel/emp/pn.htm

CARDIFF UNIVERSITY
Programme Manager
(99/21)
Five Research Associates
(99/22)
European Funded ERDF programme in the field of Energy and Environment
The project arises from the existing Welsh Development Agency sponsored centre for Energy Research and Services, based in the Cardiff School of Engineering. The centre has built up world renowned series of up to date facilities in the areas of emissions as well as characterisation of combustion, waste fuels, solid-alternative energy as well as characterisation techniques for emissions, gaseous, liquid and solid. The posts are for a period of 3 years.
For the Programme Manager you should be a post-doctoral researcher in the field of energy and the environment, with some experience in project/ facilities management. For the Research Associates you should be a post-doctoral or experienced researcher in the field of energy and environment and computational modelling. You must possess a first degree in either a science or engineering based discipline.
Salary: Programme Manager - £23,815 - £28,048 per annum
Research Associates - £15,725 - £23,815 per annum
For an application pack please ring the Personnel Division +44 (0)1222 874601 or email Persa2@cardiff.ac.uk quoting appropriate reference number.
Closing date: 11 February 1999.

hurling and criminal mischief as part of an agreement with the Cae County attorney's office. His crime was to steal nearly 87,000 pennies from Cedar Ridge Middle School. Students had amassed the one-cent coins as part of their contributions to a relief effort for Honduran victims of Hurricane Mitch.
Eighty-seven thousand coins was their target figure after they estimated that that many would be enough when laid out in a line to stretch for a mile. They were almost there when the break-in occurred. Fortunately donations have poured in following the theft, among them a 30-year penny collection donated by an Arizona family. The school managed to turn over a cheque last week for more than £3,000 to the American Red Cross.

ODDLY ENOUGH
NICK FEARN
Sex education: President Bill Clinton's definition of sex is apparently shared by a majority of American college students. Almost two thirds of a group of 600 students at a major mid-western university said they did not think engaging in oral sex counted as having sex. The findings, lined up with President Clinton's impromptu definition of sex, were politically sensitive enough to result in the editing of the respected journal which published them losing its job.
Dr George Lundberg, editor of the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, was sacked for "incredibly thrusting the journal into the political debate over the Lewinsky affair."
The survey was conducted by doctors Stephanie Sanders and June Machover, from the Kinsey Institute for Research in Sex, Gender and Reproduction at Indiana University, in Bloomington.

Get a taste of live surgery at St George's Medical School
The writer is Professor of Family Law at Staffordshire University and Director of the Centre for the Study of the Family, Law and Social Policy

O/EDUCATION

Parents are turning increasingly to private tutors to help give their children the edge in competing for places at the top schools - but are they over-reacting and placing youngsters under unnecessary pressure? By John McMinn

When average isn't enough

Parents of secondary school pupils have often employed tutors to improve the chances of their offspring at GCSE or A-level. Ten years ago, the majority of those seeking tutoring were boys, but now the gender gap is closing. Increasingly, however, it is not just struggling but average, primary school children who are being given extra help, which is a feature of much private education. Children's weaknesses can go unnoticed. Tutoring provides the individualised quality of teaching which many parents would like for their children. The tutor reassures them very specifically about their child's progress and focuses on areas of weakness.

Bob Adey runs the tutoring agency "London's Learning", based in east London. He currently employs more than 40 tutors, all qualified teachers, but says he needs many more to cope with increasing demand. His agency is seeing a rapid growth in the number of parents with children of primary age coming for tutoring. He is sure that many parents are coming to see the standard assessment tasks taken when the children are about seven at the end of key stage one of the national curriculum, or at about 11 at the end of key stage two, as a form of public examination.

This was not what was intended at their inception. The Government wanted the tests to act as a benchmark for measuring schools, not individual attainment. Many educators and parents feared it was an examination and selection process by another name. These fears now seem justified and they are creating new pressures. There is evidence across the country to suggest that parents are using the tests at age seven as evidence to push their children on.

because they are thinking a couple of years ahead to when their children have to be accepted into popular and over-subscribed secondary schools. The reason is connected directly to concern over which secondary school their child will get into - preferably one high up in the GCSE performance league tables.

There are schools all over the country with poor academic record and a consequent low rating in the league tables. Parents turn to private tuition to help their child rise above the average. Finding the money for one hour's weekly tuition is a struggle for Chris's mother, Susan. She feels her nine-year-old daughter is not being pushed at her London primary school, where she is in a class of 35, and that her work is not of a high standard. Susan's original concerns stemmed from Chris's average results in SATs at key stage one. She wants Chris to

be achieving above average results. Julia and Mark are typical of the people who are turning to tutoring to give their child an extra edge in the fight for a place at a "good" comprehensive. They live in south London and both have full-time careers. They do not have all the time they would like to give to help their children with their work. In the area where they live there are two comprehensives. One gets good examination results, the other does not. There is intense competition for places at the "good" comprehensive. It is a picture repeated across the country.

Their son Jason is eight. He enjoys learning and is doing well at school. Last year in the end of key stage one tests, Jason was assessed as level 2, the national average. In maths, science and English, his parents want him to be above the national average. They believe that being "average" won't be enough to guarantee his place in the good school in a few years time.

For Julia and Mark, tutoring reduces anxiety about their child's progress. Jason's handwriting was very poor, but after two months it is improving and his basic maths skills are better than they were. "There shouldn't be such a difference in standards between schools," says Julia. "All schools should have a mix of children from a variety of backgrounds, and work toward high standards. Tony Blair talks about 'opportunity for all' and yet we have an increasingly divisive state education system."

"We have a responsibility as parents to do the best by our children, but frankly the system stinks. The previous government talked about 'choices'. There is no choice - just a mad scramble for places at the good schools and a huge amount of stress."

Alice Kallu, a deputy head teacher at a primary school in London, is not in favour of young children being tutored, but understands why people are worried. "Who can blame parents when schools are reduced to collecting vast quantities of tokens offered by national newspapers and crisp companies to buy books? If schools had sufficient resources they would be able to educate children effectively. Parents wouldn't have to resort to having their children tutored to allay their fears."

Dennis Kitchener, a spokesman for the National Association of Head Teachers, feels that the rise in tutoring is an over-reaction by parents. "It stresses children out, and can be counter-productive. Parents are taking too much notice of SATs results. They don't carry any weight for children."

High achievement has never been so important. The intense pressure to do well and the competition for secondary places are not signs of good health in our education system. It places unfair pressure on children from an earlier and earlier age. However, with parents wanting to give their children the edge from their very first days in school, and a plethora of tutoring agencies to meet the demand, private tutoring is set to become big business.

Who can blame parents when schools are reduced to collecting tokens from newspapers and crisp companies to buy books?



Parents feel that private tutors can give their children individual attention to highlight strengths and improve weaknesses

THE INDEPENDENT Thursday 21 January 1999

in the fire



to combat the decline in health and rising obesity

PASSED/FAILED
ROGER BLACK

Roger Black MBE, 32, is an Olympic Silver Medalist in the 400 metres, and former British team captain. His television work includes 'A Question of Sport'. He presents the video 'Fighting Fat, Fighting Fit', part of the current BBC health campaign



'When I was 16 or 17, I never trained - it was 'Chariots of Fire' stuff - I just turned up, and I won.'

Track record: I left university after the first term. I wasn't talented enough to train and do medicine. All my spare time was training. Which I couldn't enjoy because of the work I should have been doing. My parents were wonderful, and there was no resistance. My father said: "Whatever you choose to do, I'll support it." A year later I won the European 400 metres championship. I know the university was pleased, because I got a letter from them and in 1992, an honorary degree. I don't regret giving up the degree at all. I got one anyway!

INTERVIEW BY JONATHAN SAJE

Ferry goods: I lived in Garsport and went to the local junior school. All I didn't want to be a vet because I didn't remember playing football. Very happy times! I wasn't aware of leaving anything, though I obviously did. I passed the 11-plus. Moving on to Portsmouth Grammar School it was suddenly, when? It was a grammar school, and I worked hard when I was made to. I would go to Portsmouth Harbour by bike or bus and then take the ferry across. It took about 10 minutes. I didn't want to go there because they didn't play football. They played rugby. I was upset, but then I played rugby on the wing, and liked it.

Space of the heart: At the school medical, when I was 11, my heart condition was discovered by the doctor. It was a leading heart valve, which I still have. In my early days I wasn't allowed to do much, but if it doesn't hurt, you just carry on, and gradually I was allowed to play rugby and run once a year at the school sports day. When I was 16 or 17, I would run about five times a year, for the county. I never trained. It was Chariots of Fire stuff. I didn't have the kit, I just turned up - and won!

Taking the Mikado: Here is an event which shows my complete lack of interest in athletics. When I was 12, I was one of the Gentlemen of Japan in the school production of The Mikado. This coincided with the evening of the English School Championships, in which I was asked to represent Hampshire. It was like a premiere meeting and a big deal. I chose to do The Mikado.

But is it Sport? I wasn't academic, but I got A-levels in Maths, Chemistry and Biology. I didn't want to read any

THE INDEPENDENT Thursday 21 January 1999

EDUCATION/7

It makes sense to merge

'At the moment, the UK system works a bit like the old Soviet Union, with no control of assets

the education institutions in what is an incredibly busy country. The current state of further and higher education owes nothing to reason or planning, but all to history and politics. The reasons why they exist are very strange. Every institution has a perverse history. Only this country could have achieved what we have."

There are many reasons why universities and colleges want to be like him. Behind many mergers lies a financial imperative, or a desire to formalise academic offerings. Moreover, there are some economies of scale to be had out of buying more sausages rolls or photocopying contracts, according to David Padleyman, bursar and fellow of New College, Oxford, and one of the authors of a new book on mergers.

But research tends to suggest that mergers don't lead to savings.

DREAMS Announce just a few personal things, but some topics haunt everyone's worst nightmares—unwanted nudity, disintegrating teeth, and sitting an exam for which you somehow forgot to prepare. Exams are a trial by ordeal, and anything that can relieve the tension and tension of revising for them is a blessing. However, you have to question the motives of any parent who would sell their six- or seven-year-old in front of SATs Tests Age 7 (*Intelligence*, \$9.99) or *Test Your Child Key Stage 1* (Teti out of Ten, £14.00). The least the software could do is make the whole exercise fun for the child, but sadly neither does more than present reams of questions with the odd bit of animation thrown in. Although both packages analyse results to show areas of improvement or weakness, the tests are so long and dull that they could only interest kids for whom the sheer novelty of using a computer has not yet worn off.

*It's the 'Grange Hill' c
revision software,
all cool shades and
dodgy accents*

mentally" by explaining what marks are awarded for, and making students accustomed to working against the clock. I use the *Grange Hill* of revision software, "cool," "shades," and dodgy cartoons. There are some nice touches designed to throw over those dolts who do it rather than doing themselves any else.

Let's GCSE (£19.99) makes a valiant attempt to cover all the bases – a pretty much sure success. An extensive tutorial section takes you through syllabuses, multiple-choice, progress tests assesses your knowledge, there are practice exams which you write on paper, and even yourself in a no-fills but thorough package which gives you the best – and the worst – both worlds.

Alternatively, if you can eschew the crutches management approval aligns with Alcorn's range of titles covering the national curriculum for GCSE and at levels (£19.99). Less revision software than work-work comparisons, they take students through worked examples and provide a bank of exam questions to test themselves on: no more, I think, than is reasonable. But good old-fashioned pedagogy at the click of a mouse. Teachers, watch your backs.